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Virginie.

A TALE OF ONE HUNDRED YEARS AGO.

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CHAPTER LXVII.

HOME.

Poor Jacques's death made an entire change in the life of the La Beauce family. There was now no inducement to keep up the Café de la Grande Nation. It had long been irksome to Virginie to manage the business of the establishment, and she did it only from a sense of duty, knowing that her father would be heartbroken if his business were stopped during his life. Her husband, as we have seen, quite approved of her conduct. After having lived so long with his father-in-law and enjoyed all the protection he could afford, it would have been a churlish return to forbid his wife to appear at her father's *comptoir*. But as there was really no necessity for the continuance of the business, now that its success could give no pleasure to Jacques, he felt that the duties hardly suited the position of his wife. Jacques's property, to which Virginie succeeded by his will, proved much greater than anyone could suppose. Besides the sum handed over to M. Aubert, there was much gold and silver found stowed away, the savings of the Le Blancs, and, moreover, it appeared that a good portion of the town of Sèvres, besides the Couronne

d'Or, had been quietly acquired by the thrifty inn-keepers. Virginie then found herself a considerable heiress.

The Comte La Beauce sighed for his former country life. In vain the Government, influenced by General Bonaparte, offered to reinstate him in his military rank. 'Were the country in danger,' he answered, 'he would be the first to join in the defence. But he had no ambition to satisfy. He felt his duty called him elsewhere.' General Bonaparte was greatly offended when, some time after, La Beauce gave him the same answer on being offered a general's commission in the army of Italy, to the command of which he, Bonaparte, had been appointed. But the Comte was firm in his resolve.

It was in the month of March 1796 that La Beauce and his family returned to the Château. Three years and a-half had passed since he had been brought to Paris a prisoner. What years! It seemed as though a lifetime had been lived through since that time. He and Virginie were young then, now they felt old. All the gaiety seemed to have gone from them while they were in Paris. Even little Jacques, though quite a child, was quite solemn and circumspect in his language, having been strictly drilled during the Terror not to commit himself even during his games. So it was a relief to them all to feel themselves rolling along the high road to Chartres.

As they slowly ascended the steep hilly street of Sèvres, Virginie glanced up to the well-known window where she had spent so much of her time looking towards Paris and wondering what kind of world it was that lived there? Now that she had seen more, now that she had passed three years in Paris itself, she almost wished she could have been allowed to remain in her former happy ignorance! The world of her dreams was indeed different from the real Paris! Where were the chivalrous men and virtuous women with whom she had peopled the world in her convent days? Poor Rousselet! He was small, grim to look at, irritable, she had felt a repugnance towards him. Yet was he the nearest approach to her ideal! She shuddered as she thought of him and so many others. All gone. All become things of naught, *néants*, as Danton said. No, surely. For such there was surely some happy future. And then her father? Now that he was gone she had learnt to appreciate him a thousand times more. His absence made a mighty gap in her life. Yet him, too, she had not loved as she ought. Let her, then, not spare her affections to those left her. Her hand sought her

husband's as they passed the Couronne d'Or, and she called little Jacques to her, and, as she kissed him, she pointed out the old inn.

'Seest thou that old house?' she said. 'It was there Grand-père Jacques lived, and there I was born.'

'And is he there now?' asked little Jacques. Through her tears Virginie kissed the boy again.

'Alas! no,' she sobbed. 'He has gone to a better world, where we shall all see him if we lead good and virtuous lives.'

'Why dost thou cry then, *petite mère*?' asked Jacques.

'Because we know not how much we love a person till we lose him,' she answered.

'I could not love thee more, *petite mère*, or father, or Céli,' quoth little Jacques with a half sob.

'Then must thou always remember that thy *grandpère* Jacques was a good man, who worked that others might be rich and great.'

'He made the nicest little cakes for Petit Jacques!' cried the boy.

The coach sped on its way, through Versailles, all desolate now, with its great château never to be inhabited again, over it a large notice whereon was printed: 'The Property of the Republic one and indivisible. Liberty, Equality, Fraternity!' Then on again into the country, and so through a long day, till, towards evening, Chartres was passed. There, too, things had changed. The convent where Virginie had been educated was turned into a storehouse. At its door stood a Republican soldier, one of the 'blues' who had helped to subjugate the Vendée. The cathedral itself was filled with sacks of corn with another soldier on guard. On they drove through the city, leaving it by the Alençon road. Till at last they turned up to the left through the thick wood where Virginie had first met Jean Durand, and through the avenue to the dear home where had been spent the three happy years of her life.

There was no line of well-drilled and handsomely dressed domestics to receive them. Only the bailiff, who seemed twenty years older than when they had last seen him,

'Ah, Monsieur le Comte,' he cried, sobbing with emotion. 'Welcome home. We have had no happiness since you left. May your return bring us back the good days of the past!'

La Beauce took the good man by the hand.

'We have all of us had our troubles. Please God, we will bear those in store for us together!'

They went together through the big house. In one or two of the rooms the Revolutionists had committed sad havoc. But in most of them, things remained as they were. Only the house felt stuffy and damp. Somehow Virginie was disappointed. This was not the happy home she had left, and to which, in her idle fancy, she had hoped to return. She went to a window and looked over the garden in which she had taken formerly such delight. There everything was changed. The flower-beds were all a confused tangle, so that their very form was not to be discerned, the neatly-trimmed hedges had grown out of all shape. On the terrace itself grass grew, and young saplings had sprouted between the stones, forcing them apart and making unsightly gaps in their neatly-joined lines. In silent tears she gazed upon the wreck. It was her husband's hand on her shoulder that roused her.

'There is a mighty change, my dear,' he said, 'here as elsewhere. But we are home again and all is well.'

Virginie threw her arms round his neck and sobbed on his shoulder. She had done the same on her first arrival seven years ago. How different all was then !

Yet with Louison and Jean's help they made everything pretty comfortable, so that when they went to rest it seemed still somewhat like home. A busy time it was for the little family during the next few days. The old servants were all departed and scattered, nor was it possible to supply their place. It was therefore settled that the greater portion of the house should be shut up, and with a very reduced establishment, they should live in a corner of the Château. The same retrenchment was necessary in the stables and farm. The change was brought about without a murmur. When in a few days a wagon-load of furniture arrived from Paris, Virginie set to work and rearranged her old sitting-room, placing therein all the things Rousselet and her father had purchased for her room at Sèvres. In a place of honour was the Sèvres *jardinière*, in which once more she placed the sweet spring flowers she loved so well. As she arranged them she shed many tears, for all around her reminded her of the two good men who had gone for ever !

Soon the noise of their return spread through the country and groups of tenants came each day to pay their respects to 'Monsieur and Madame.' Very cordial was the greeting of these poor people, many tears of delight were shed, but, amidst all the pleasant phrases of welcome, there was the invariable refrain :

'Ah ! monsieur, what times we have had ! How we have suffered ! Now that Monsieur has come back again all will be well !'

Nevertheless La Beauce found the people changed. They had still the same desire to lean on their superiors, the same touching faith in the deity they were not allowed to worship. Only among the younger men there was a feeling of revolt against something they knew not what. The spirit of war had passed over this country. The Vendée was not far off. 'Chouans' silently made their way to many a quiet fire-side and inflamed the peasantry against the government and the hated 'blues,' as the Republican army were called. In a country district from which all the superior class, whether landowners or clergy, had been taken, it was natural enough that the badly educated peasantry should lend a ready ear to the daring men who spoke in the name of loyalty and religion. Many on the return of La Beauce seemed to expect he would take the lead in the organisation of the revolt, which was to put the King again on the throne of St. Louis and reinstate the Catholic church. Their surprise was great when they found that he was decidedly opposed to any rising ; that he bade them patiently wait for better days, and trust that all would right itself before long.

'It is useless,' he urged, 'for you to contend against the government. See what the Vendéans have brought on themselves. Aid was promised from the *émigrés*. What aid ! Just enough to lead the unfortunate people to their ruin. Believe me, France will not have a king who, to keep his position, must depend on foreign bayonets.'

La Beauce's influence was greatly increased by the help of poor Jacques Le Blanc's savings. Distress was very great throughout the land. Bread was wanting, and, more than that, seed was not to be had to prepare for another year.

With Virginie's full consent her husband freely spent Jacques's good broad pieces. The Château became a centre of aid for those in want. The whole country side right up to Chartres came there for their seed. Every day brought new applicants. The great barn in the *métairie* or farm was fitted up as an office, over which Jean Durand presided. No better choice could have been made. Jean knew everybody for twenty miles round, and, what was more to the point, he knew the land they cultivated, and could distribute the exact proportion due to each. It was a grand sight to see him clad in uniform, which he could not be persuaded to leave off, and in which no one could recognise the

quondam poacher and outlaw, seated at a table listening to the interminable talk of the applicants and replying with monosyllables very much to the point. Louison would steal out from her work to look at him, sometimes bringing Annette with her, for she loved a confidant, and would have lost half her pleasure had she been obliged to keep her thoughts to herself.

‘What a man !’ she would cry to Annette as they ran back to their work. ‘Capable of anything and to be trusted in everything ! I feel ashamed to think of myself when I look at him !’

Amongst those who came to the Château was Poirier. He did not appear among the first who greeted his landlord’s return for his dignity forbade it. Poirier was now the Maire of the agricultural commune. He was if anything stouter and more choleric looking than before, but he had an anxious, unquiet look, that showed that his duties sat heavily on him.

‘General,’ he said bowing, ‘I greet you in the name of the commune. It is an honour to us to have one who has served the country settled in our quiet vicinity. It is—yes—certainly, here the worthy man got redder than ever. He had evidently rehearsed a speech, but his memory was quite as treacherous as it had been four years before. He paused and looked round, there was no one to help ! With his municipal scarf around him he looked the picture of misery and withal infinitely comic.

La Beauce promptly came to his rescue. He held out his hand. ‘My dear Poirier,’ he said, ‘I am glad to see you. So you are the Maire of the commune ! They could not have chosen a better man. I trust the peace of our village gives you no disquietude !’

‘Ah, Monsieur le Comte,’ began Poirier. ‘I should say General ; I should never have kept the lads from harm had I not been helped,’ here Poirier looked round suspiciously. ‘Monsieur,’ he whispered, ‘I should not only lose my position as Maire, but my head too, were it discovered the Abbé has helped me !’

‘What !’ cried La Beance, ‘our dear Abbé Leroux ?’

‘Hist ! Not so loud. Even so. The Abbé has been among us all the while. He is now on my farm, working as one of my men. “I will never desert my flock,” he said to me ; “nor will I, by flying in the faces of the wretches who rule France”—those are the Abbé’s words, Monsieur le Comte, not mine—“deprive my people of my aid in their trouble, though by doing so I might get a martyr’s crown and gain the approbation of my own conscience.” So, Monsieur, he has been with me while the whole country has

been overrun with blues. I ask pardon; I forgot you were a general.'

'My dear Poirier, you give me the best news I have heard for a long day.'

'Ay!' cried Poirier, 'and each Sunday we have mass in the wood, with our men on the watch against surprise and treachery. For the matter of that, I should like to see the man in my commune who would not die for the Abbé.' And Poirier swelled himself out with importance, and looked around to discover the contumacious individual whom he was prepared to pulverise!

La Beause seized his hat and stick.

'Come, friend Poirier, take me to my old friend the Abbé,' he cried eagerly.

Leaving word he might be late, he started with the redoubtable Maire in the country cart which had brought his Worship to the Château. As they rolled along, Poirier retailed all the news of the last four years, and La Beause learnt more during his two miles drive than he had during the weeks he had been home.

Their way led them past the little church of the village. Poirier pointed to it as they neared it. 'Ah! monsieur,' he said, 'it is nearly four years since it was opened! Monsieur le Curé comes here sometimes at night, and dusts it out himself that all may be kept in order; and people are still buried there, though the graveyard is much overgrown. We dare not keep that in order. *Tenez*,' cried Poirier, pointing with his whip to a corner where there was a new grave, 'here is where Legrand lies. Monsieur will remember Legrand! He died last winter. It was he who forgot his speech the day of the planting the "Mai."'

Poirier had talked himself into the conviction that his speech had been the success of that gathering.

La Beause, as he glanced over the little resting-place of the dead, noticed that, though the rest of the graveyard was sadly overgrown, the grave where Madame Durand and Petit Jean lay had been newly cared for, and the wreath Virginie had placed on the cross was still there, though, of course, withered and blackened!

It was late in the afternoon as they approached Poirier's farm. The portly Maire cried out, as he drove up to the yard, and a man appeared to take charge of the horse and cart. A man clad like a peasant, with a peasant's heavy walk; beneath his broad hat gleamed a pair of bright eyes; the face was close shaven and clean. At a glance La Beause recognised his friend the Abbé.

'Take the *Citoyen Général* in the cart to the stables to show him the new horses,' cried Poirier authoritatively. In silence the man led the way. It was only when the stable door was shut, and they found themselves alone, that the good Abbé turned and embraced the Comte.

'My friend,' he cried, 'do I at last see you again? I could not go the Château, for I fear you are watched. But my heart was there when I heard you and your dear wife had returned safe from all the horrors of Paris. Ah! how wise you are to come back to us! I know your opinions and mine do not agree, in some things I know you are a Republican, and I—no matter what I am. Still, you are an honest man and have suffered too. My dear boy—for to me you are a boy—I love you.' The good man paused and looked at the Comte through his tears.

'*Il faut que je vous embrasse!*' he cried, as with all the effusive affection of a Frenchman he threw his arms round La Beause and kissed him.

The two friends had so long a talk together that it was evening before they were aware of it. As they left the stable they found the anxious Poirier hovering round to keep watch lest they should be disturbed.

'Ah, monsieur,' he cried, 'to see you and M. le Curé together is indeed a pleasure.'

'It will not be long before the Abbé will again be able to take his place in his own church,' said La Beause. 'In Paris, they are already beginning to see that it is impossible for the people to live without religion.'

'Praise be to God,' said the Abbé solemnly, 'that madness is past.' He walked back most of the way with La Beause in the pleasant spring evening, for it was the night he visited the church, to keep it straight and orderly, that all might be ready when the day came for his recommencing his duties. The peasants that they passed on the road saluted them respectfully, and looked anxiously after the good man lest he should want their aid. And so conversing together, as in the good old days, they approached the little church. With his hand on the gate the Abbé paused and, touching La Beause's arm, drew his attention to a figure indistinctly seen in the gloaming. It was Jean Durand by the side of the graves of his wife and child.

'I have seen him here every evening,' whispered the Abbé; 'to him much will be forgiven, for assuredly he has loved much.'

Without paying much attention to Jean, the Abbé pressed

La Beauce's hand, then, along the grass-grown path, made his way to the church.

Virginie's delight at the news of the Abbé's safety was very great. She was with difficulty dissuaded by her husband from starting early the next morning to see him, and it was only on his promising to bring him the next evening that she consented to postpone the pleasure of the visit.

From that day the Abbé was constantly at the Château. A service was held there every Sunday which soon became attended by many besides the little household. To Virginie it was an unspeakable relief to be allowed to worship her Creator in the way she had been brought up to believe it was fitting He should be worshipped. No one who could have seen her at her devotions would have wished her otherwise than she was. Riouffe, free-thinker though he was, declared himself quite awed by the serenity of her belief, as Rousselet had been before him. On the few occasions when Virginie talked to him on religious matters, Riouffe held his peace.

'I would to heaven, madame,' he said one day, 'I could believe as you do. To argue on the matter is useless. It is in the heart that a response is felt to the articles of a creed, and, if the heart feel it not, let no one affect to believe on conviction.'

CHAPTER LXVIII.

FAITHFUL TO THE END.

So slid away the year 1796. To the Château came the dim echoes of the young General Bonaparte and the army of Italy. In quick succession victory succeeded victory, till heads of men grew dizzy at the rapidity of his movements, and the young nation itself revelled in the pride of his conquests. But Célimène was more interested in the army of the north, where her hero fought. There Marceau and Jourdain upheld the honour of the Republic. From time to time Colonel Tamplin wrote to his friend and old commander letters which Célimène well knew were for her. The honest fellow mixed up the tale of the war with many a tender message for the ladies. It was not for his country alone that he fought. It was for glory, for advancement, for love. His own deeds were nothing to him, they were to make

him worthy of her, to bridge the great space that, in his simple mind, there was between his humble origin and the gentle birth of her he loved. Though as a Republican he would have loudly declared all men to be equal, his modesty told him that, as a colonel in the Republican army, he was no match for Célimène, nor would his means allow him to think of marriage. Yet the fire of hope burnt brightly in his heart, and in his letters he constantly talked of a brighter day when he could hope to attain an independence, or at least obtain some respite from his constant service. In 1797 he wrote : ‘ General Augerau came to the army a few days ago. His appearance greatly astonished us. He was resplendent with gold, his uniform filled us with admiration. If it is thus generals are treated in the army of Italy, what may we not hope ? We seemed indeed a poverty-stricken lot by the side of this man. Yet have we been fighting the battles of our country, even as he has done ! ’

During this year Jean Durand had greatly changed. He was quite grey and paler than death itself. He had resumed his old vagrant habits. During the summer he was absent whole nights ; no one knew why or where he went. Louison, whose eyes were sharpened by love, first discovered his absence.

‘ You know, mademoiselle, he was always so,’ she said to Célimène with a sigh. ‘ Ah, why cannot the poor fellow settle down ! ’

One day petit Jacques surprised Louison with the old cockade.

‘ Why, Louison,’ cried the boy, ‘ that is Jean’s.’

‘ Jean’s ! ’ exclaimed Louison. ‘ Bless the boy, what could put that into thy head ? ’

‘ It is Jean’s,’ persisted the child. ‘ It is like the one he wears when in uniform. Give it to me, that I may show it to him.’

But Louison could not part with her treasure. She carefully replaced it in her box and locked it up. The wondering boy saw her eyes were full of tears.

‘ What ails thee, Louison ? ’ he asked ; ‘ and why dost thou keep that old thing. Jean would give thee a new one, I am sure, if thou wert to ask him.’

‘ Little angel,’ cried Louison, embracing the boy, ‘ thou dost not understand.’

‘ But——’ expostulated Jacques.

‘ Chut ! Speak not of what thou canst not comprehend,’ cried

Louison, and she began talking confusedly of all kinds of things, thinking to make the child forget what he had seen.

But little Jacques did not forget, and happening to be out in the woods with Jean two days after, he said suddenly :

‘ Jean, tell me, why does Louison keep thy old cockade ? ’

‘ My cockade, petit Monsieur ? ’ said Jean with a hoarse laugh, turning towards the child.

‘ Yes, thine ! and she would not let me bring it back to thee, nor would she tell me why. She was crying, too—I saw the tears in her eyes.’

Jean walked on silently, twisting his long moustaches, as he always did when in deep thought.

‘ But why, Jean ? ’ asked the boy again.

‘ I cannot tell, petit Monsieur.’

‘ She must be stupid, must she not ? I saw *petite mère* often crying over father’s letters when he was away, but then she is married to father. Thou art not married to Louison, art thou, Jean ? ’

‘ No,’ answered Jean. ‘ I was married once and had a little boy like thee, but that is past. I shall never marry again ! ’

‘ But where is thy little boy ? ’

‘ Where ? Dead—dead. They came and burnt my house, and in it were my wife and child. A boy like thee, petit Monsieur, only he was ill; so ill that he could not leave his bed. The cowards knew it, and they knew the mother would not leave her child, so they burnt them both together.’

‘ But where wert thou, Jean ? Why didst thou not kill them all ? ’ cried petit Jacques, who believed greatly in his friend Jean, whom he considered the strongest, bravest, and best of men next to his father.

‘ I ! ’ answered Jean with a moan. ‘ I was lying senseless. They battered in my head and thought they had killed me, too. But I lived, as he found who did the deed.’

‘ Oh, Jean, tell me about it,’ cried the boy.

But Jean stopped suddenly and turned deadly pale. He passed his hand over his eyes as though to clear away a mist from them, then staggered against a tree, at the foot of which he slid to the ground.

‘ Jean ! ’ cried the child, thoroughly frightened, ‘ what ails thee ? ’

Jean raised a flask he always carried to his mouth, with his teeth drew the cork, and took a draught of its contents.

'My poor Jean, art thou ill?' said Jacques, and he sat beside Jean. Placing his head on his shoulder he raised his rough hand to his lips.

A sad smile came over Jean's scarred face as he stroked the boy's soft cheek with his great sinewy hand.

'Even as thou art,' he murmured.

So the two sat for some minutes till Jean recovered himself sufficiently to rise.

'Come, petit Monsieur, we will go home.'

'But art thou well?' asked petit Jacques.

'Thinkest thou a big man like I am cannot walk?' cried Jean. 'That would be a droll idea.'

The next time Jean saw Louison he took her hand.

'Thou hast an old cockade of mine,' he said.

'Who told thee?' stammered Louison.

'Thou art a kind-hearted woman,' said Jean, leaving her question unanswered. 'Thou knowest my history. It is one I can never forget. Do thou bear it in mind in thinking of me,' and with his other hand he patted Louison's that he had taken.

'Oh, Jean!' began Louison, but tears rose to her eyes and she could say no more.

Jean looked at her sadly, then with a sigh he turned away. This was the only sign Louison ever received that Jean at all divined her secret.

Early in 1797 a second son was born to Virginie, whom she christened by the name of Charles Honoré, and Riouffe stood sponsor for him in his name and that of Rousselet. By this time the Abbé Leroux ventured to celebrate the service of his religion in his old church. The old course of life was renewed at the Château, and on Sunday evenings the Abbé dined there and listened to Virginie's music as he had done before 'the troubles.' In the summer of this year Colonel Tamplin paid a visit to his old friend, and tacitly, almost without a word, it became understood that he was betrothed to Célimène. The marriage was, however, not to take place till Tamplin could see his way more clearly.

'I can wait,' he cried cheerily. 'It is nothing to me, for I shall be busily occupied. But thou, Célimène, to waste thy life in waiting for a man like me!'

'Thinkest thou that thou hast more patience than a woman?' asked Célimène. 'Penelope waited patiently for Ulysses, though

she had many suitors, while he, like a man, was amusing himself with sirens and other naughty people.'

'There are no sirens with the army of the Rhine !'

'I hope not.'

'And if there were, what would they be compared to thee ?'

'It is better there should be none,' quoth Célimène decidedly. 'A man is not to be trusted. Besides, monsieur, you are a soldier, and all soldiers are faithless.'

'I swear to thee, Célimène,' began Tamplin. But Célimène laughed gaily.

'Thou didst swear to me often in the old days,' she cried.

Tamplin had grown bolder since those times. The eyes of a chronicler, ever watching to record the deeds, sayings, and thoughts of his character, must perforce sometimes be intentionally averted, lest his prying should cause a blush to rise to his careworn cheek. So let him pass over this scene in which Célimène called her lover an 'unmannerly hussar,' and declared that she hated him, without ever thinking of saving herself from his hands or calling for aid.

When Colonel Tamplin took his leave to rejoin his regiment, if he departed with deep regret, at all events he had the consolation of knowing that one heart he left behind beat in sympathy with his ; and if visions of rosy lips and tear-dimmed eyes accompanied him, no vain regret of missed opportunities this time filled him with remorse.

The Abbé Leroux, though allowed to celebrate the offices of his religion in his chapel, did so only through the favours of the authorities. No one complained, so the services were tolerated. He himself was perfectly aware that he was allowed to resume his old life because he did so without any parade or fuss, and therefore humbly, as became a servant of the God he worshipped. He performed all the menial duties of his church himself. He himself was wont to sweep and dust the church ; he alone prepared everything for those who wished to worship. At daybreak each day the worthy Abbé came to the church with his key, and set to work with a will ; and, as no one does better work than he who is filled with real zeal, the little church itself was a miracle of cleanliness. No speck of dust was there to be found. The most fastidious housewife was never more particular than the Abbé, who prided himself on his work and grew to enjoy it.

One morning, towards the end of September 1798, the Abbé opened the little gate of the churchyard. The sun was just rising

amid a glory of mist. The ground was heavily covered with dew, and each little drop of moisture glistened like a jewel in the long grass. The Abbé paused, with his hand on the gate, to gaze over the scene. Every tree and shrub was known to him. The little church, the woods of the Château, the village with its long straggling street, all were rendered familiar to him by the observation of many years. Yet, by the action of the sun, even this familiarity became unfamiliar, and appeared more beautiful in its fantastic effects of soft light and grey shadow.

'So is humanity,' moralised the Abbé. We think ourselves familiar with it, we in our pride imagine we understand it thoroughly, when lo! the great Creator, by a simple effort of nature, changes the whole aspect of things, till we hardly recognise what we thought we knew. Yes!' said the Abbé, speaking softly to himself, for he was wont to think out his thoughts aloud, 'how infinitely beautiful is nature in all its phases. Is there nothing but terror in the storm-cloud, in the quick lightning, or the awe-inspiring thunder? Does not the thought of man rise from earth to heaven then, when he fears most? And in these times, when assuredly the terrors of the Almighty have come on this land, are there not many who have raised their hands, not in vain, to the great Ruler of all? And this scene, now so magical in its peaceful beauty, have I not seen it lurid with the fires of revenge and echoing to the cries of hatred? So!' said the good man as he passed through the little gate, shall peace succeed strife, and love triumph over hate. For in the end we shall meet here to prepare for the peace of the great hereafter.'

The Abbé's feet sounded crisply on the path which he now kept clean and free from weeds. He paused as he looked around on the little mounds which concealed so much mouldering humanity that he remembered once brisk and full of life. His eye wandered to the last mound that had there appeared, where lay all that remained of old Legrand, from there he glanced towards the cross over the remains of the Durand family. But he looked no further. For amid the grass by the side of that cross lay the form of a man. Softly the Abbé threaded his way among the graves till he stood beside this man, in whom he recognised Jean Durand. Did he sleep? The Abbé stooped down and gently laid his hand on Jean's cheek. It was cold and clammy. Jean was lying with one arm over the grave, with his head face downwards, close to the little cross. The wreath that Virginie had placed there nearly ten years before had slipped

from its place, and now rested on the back of his head. Some of the withered flowers lay on the dead man's cheek. For Jean was dead. The Abbé felt sure of it before he laid his hand on his wrist. There was no pulse there. The brave heart had ceased to beat. On the grave of those he had loved with such constancy, death had overtaken poor Jean, who had survived so many grizzly wounds and witnessed the death of so many brave men. Here, at last, he had found peace by the side of his little son.

The Abbé looked sadly at the dead man.

'At last he is happy,' he murmured, as he turned away to seek help to remove the body.

CHAPTER LXIX.

CONCERNING LOUSIC.

THE news of the finding of poor Jean arrived early at the Château, for ill news travels apace. La Beauce was told it by eight o'clock and broke it gently to Virginie shortly after. Both were greatly affected. Poor Jean had been so mixed up with their life that he had become one of the family. Each and every member loved him. But Virginie understood him thoroughly; to her his devotion had been so marked, yet so delicate, that she had learned to depend greatly on him. Was anything to be done, why there was Jean! To whom could she entrust her son but to Jean? He was always there to do her bidding, and was never more pleased than when employed by her. When she heard of his death she felt as great a void in her life as when her father had been taken from her two years before. But here, at least, she had no qualms of conscience. She had given this simple nature what he most desired. She had trusted him—she had divined his love for her, and had shown him so. As she hurried down to the little church where she heard he lay, she called to mind all that she owed him. As the tears coursed down her cheek she seemed to see the little cabin and Petit Jean and his mother. Ten years ago was it? It seemed more. But only ten years?

When she arrived at the church she found a small group of men around the gate, who took off their hats and silently made way for her. As she passed up the path the Abbé met her. He led her first to the well-remembered cross. 'It was there I found

him, madame,' he said in a low voice, 'with his face buried in the grass as though he were whispering his last words to those who had gone before.'

'Poor Jean,' murmured Virginie.

'Nay, why should we pity him?' asked the Abbé. 'Jean's heart died ten years ago. He has but joined those he loved.'

Virginie lingered a moment by the side of the grave, where the marks of Jean's body were still visible in the crushed grass, then she slowly followed the Abbé to the church. At the door of the small room that the Abbé used as a vestry he paused.

'That good woman Louison has already discharged the last offices due to the dead,' he said. 'You will find her there. Excuse me if I leave you. The Abbé opened the door and Virginie hurriedly entered.

Jean was stretched on a table covered with a white sheet, on his breast lay the garland Virginie had placed on his son's tomb, at his head stood Louison.

'See, madame,' said she as she removed the face-cloth from the corpse, 'how beautiful and peaceful he looks! Ah, *le brave homme*,' and Louison, with an impatient gesture whisked away a tear which ran down her cheek.

'Poor Jean,' said Virginie, gazing at his gaunt features, hardly more pale in their deathly stillness than when he was alive.

'Do you know where they found him?' asked Louison, coming close to her mistress.

Virginie bowed her head. 'How he loved them!' she said.

'He loved you, too,' cried Louison in a harsh, dry voice, not without resentment.

'Yes,' said Virginie, 'he loved me, too, for I reminded him of them.' And softly this beautiful lady stooped and kissed Jean's cold brow. There was silence for a few minutes; Virginie was kneeling by the side of Jean, and Louison watching her with eager eyes. At length Virginie rose from her knees.

'Tenez, madame,' said Louison hoarsely, 'I found this next his heart. Perhaps madame would wish to have it!' With flashing eyes fixed on her mistress Louison held out a locket, through the glass of which could be seen a lock of brown hair of the same shade as Virginie's.

'How!' cried Virginie. 'Thou hast dared to remove it?'

'And why should I not?' asked Louison defiantly. Virginie took the locket and kissed it.

'It is the lock of hair I cut from the head of petit Jean,' she

said sadly. She did not look at Louison but at Jean as she spoke, nor did she understand the feelings of the faithful woman.

'Madame,' she said with a choking voice, 'are you sure it is the hair of his little boy?'

Virginie turned her head and looked at Louison.

'What ails thee, Louison?' she asked; 'did I not tell thee it was petit Jean's hair? See the date of his death I had placed on the locket.'

Louison took the trinket from her mistress's hand and gazed at it with a puzzled look. She was not great at reading, but as she looked from the, to her, meaningless maze of lines to Virginie's honest face, it was easier for her to read the truth there. Tears filled her eyes, and, sinking on her knees, she raised her mistress's hand to her lips.

'Oh, pardon, madame,' she sobbed, 'that I should have doubted Jean himself! Madame, I was mad with grief, or I would not have dared to take it from him, and now I dare not replace it. Oh, Jean, Jean, thou wouldst never forgive me,' and she stretched her hands towards the poor inanimate form before her as though she expected to have an answer from those lips that would never speak again.

But Virginie took the locket from her hand and tenderly and reverently placed it once more over Jean's heart, where it had hung since it had been given to his charge. She then kissed his brow again and turned to the door. Louison had remained on her knees watching. As her mistress passed her she caught her by her skirt.

'You forgive me, Madame?' she supplicated.

'Thou wast mad, Louison. Thou didst not know what thou saidest,' answered Virginie kindly as she left the room.

Till Jean was laid beside petit Jean and his wife, Louison never left him. When he was lowered into his grave she turned away with tears in her eyes.

'He no longer belongs to me,' she said, 'but to the other.'

From that day Louison wore nothing but black. Under no pretence could she be persuaded to put on any colour. Nor did anyone ever see the old cockade again. Only each night as the good woman retired to her rest, she carried to her room the box which contained her treasure, which she placed at the head of her bed, and over it, on the wall of the room, was hung the rough stick Jean had used in his rambles. Annette Pinard recovered her health and looks, and found an admirer and a husband among

La Beauce's tenants ; but Mademoiselle Louison, as she was usually called, never looked kindly on any man, and to the day of her death remained true to her one love who had never but once said a kind word to her !

Many years after, when the Comtesse de la Beouce was a stately old lady, and the King's government had followed the Emperors, when the son of Egalité was the head of the state as king of the French, Louison, a wrinkled and rheumatic old woman, feeling that her time was nearly come, took her mistress's still soft warm hand and kissed it. For Virginie and her granddaughter had come to see her old servant and friend.

' Madame,' said old Louison, ' I have served more than fifty years, yet have I never asked Madame a favour till now. Madame, for many years past I have wanted Madame's forgiveness.'

' Louison,' said Virginie, ' my old friend, thou hast indeed served me and mine faithfully. There is nothing thou couldst ask I could refuse.'

Louison's eyes, once bright and clear, now surrounded with innumerable wrinkles, turned fondly towards her mistress.

' Madame was always an angel of goodness,' she sobbed.

' What is it thou wouldest of me, my good Louison ? ' asked Virginie.

' Mademoiselle,' said the old woman ' will be so kind as to give me that old box.'

The girl brought it to Louison. It had been an old friend, this box ; the children of the La Beouce family had known it for years, but no one had ever seen it opened. Now the old woman with trembling fingers produced the key.

' Madame will forgive me, then ? ' she asked once more, her hand pausing as the key turned.

Virginie stooped and kissed her old friend.

' Hold the box, my little angel,' said Louison to the girl. The key turned and the lid opened. Inside was a curious collection of odds and ends. With trembling hands old Louison took up the first neatly folded packet and uncovered it. It was the old cockade. She raised it to her lips and kissed it.

' It was dear Jean's,' she said softly.

Many other little mementoes of the children of the family she then produced. Then a little paper with a small lock of golden hair.

' It was Monsieur Jacques's,' murmured Louison. ' I took it the day Madame left the café for the prison of La Carme,'

Virginie tenderly took it and kissed it too. Petit Jacques, where was he ?

Then, from the bottom of the box, the old woman took two letters and gave them to Virginie.

‘These are madame’s,’ she said tremblingly.

They were the two letters Virginie had written to her father, lying unopened all these years !

Virginie took them ; watching, Louison eyed her keenly.

‘Louison,’ cried Virginie with tears in her eyes. ‘How couldst thou do this ?’

‘Madame does not pardon then !’

‘Ah ! Louison, thou canst never tell what I have suffered through thy folly.’

‘I did it for the best,’ whined Louison. ‘Ah, Madame, forgive me. It is the first favour I have ever asked ! Mademoiselle, plead for me !’

Virginie, with the letters in her hand, stood with downcast head. All her old fault seemed to come back to her. Father, Rousselet, husband, all were now gone, and her fault remained.

She kneeled by the side of her old servant and sobbed.

‘How should I not forgive,’ she murmured, ‘I who have so much to be forgiven ?’

The wondering girl who regarded her grandmother as a saint, looked at her with widely open eyes.

‘Madame,’ whispered Louison. ‘I have one more favour to ask now that Madame forgives. When I go, let me be placed near Jean, and let this be buried with me.’

Her wish was fulfilled. Louison lies by Jean, and with her Jean’s old cockade.

CHAPTER LXX.

IN PARIS AGAIN.

PARIS looked its brightest in the summer of the year 1800. The old order of things had been overthrown ; the troubles of the Revolution were over ; confidence reigned in the place of terror. Once more the gardens of the Tuileries were thronged with *flâneurs*, once more the shopkeepers exposed their valuables to the public without fear, once more the people laughed and enjoyed themselves, for their young hero was Consul, and the world of Paris seemed young again.

In a handsome house in the Rue St. Pierre the Comte de la Beauce and his wife established themselves that they might superintend the preparations for Célimène's marriage. At last fortune smiled on the brave Tamplin. He was one of Bonaparte's generals now, having fought with him in Egypt. He formed one of the 'Military family,' which the First Consul gathered round him. 'You must marry,' cried their chief, and Tamplin, nothing loth, wrote up the joyful news to his old friend, and claimed the promise of his lady-love. Therefore it was that La Beauce brought his family to Paris.

Tamplin was still with the army. But the battle of Marengo had been fought, and day by day the brave officers who had there distinguished themselves returned to Paris, which was in a wild state of exaltation. '*Vive Bonaparte!*' cried the people, '*Vive la République! Vive l'armée!*'

In Virginie's *salon* there were more Republicans than Royalists. The *émigrés* who now crowded back to Paris could not forgive a *mésalliance*, and the ladies especially were hard on Virginie, who had never been 'presented,' and had sprung from some unknown family. The men and women of the Republic had no such scruples. They came to her parties and listened to the excellent music she always promised them, where, if they did not understand, they could at least applaud the fair lady, whose voice touched even the ignorant by its sweetness. The laughing Célimène, too, was not without her admirers. If she had chosen she could have found a husband among the greatest in the land. She was of a noble family, and the First Consul himself having declared there ought to be a fusion of classes, other generals beside Tamplin were won by her pretty face and merry laugh. But to Tamplin she was true, and his return she awaited with patience and confidence.

Among the *émigrés* who came to the house was St. Aubray. His life had been one of adventure since he left France. He had served with the Austrians, he had starved in London, he had wandered over the whole of Europe, yet, when he returned to Paris, he was just the headstrong boy he was in 1789. His trials had taught him nothing; he had not unlearnt a single prejudice or gained a liberal sentiment. France was to him the France of Louis XV.; the Revolution was a rebellion that was wearing itself out; the old state of things would surely return and to aid them he, the Vicomte de St. Aubray, was willing to lend his assistance. The only thing he had

lost was his respect for his cousin, whom he now viewed with careless indulgence, as a man who had strayed from the right path, but whom he could, when the proper time came, bring back to his duty.

‘ My dear Etienne,’ he said gaily, ‘ thou canst not admire these men ! They have no manners and no breeding. That General Lannes, though he is dressed respectably, has the language of a common trooper, and the manners of my coachman. Talleyrand is well enough ; he is one of us at heart. This sallow-faced Corsican, who gives himself such airs, is *roturier* enough to make one sick. France will never submit long to a man that cannot even talk her language with elegance ! He and his family will shortly be swept away from our path. All but the women. I must admit the *coquin’s* sisters are worth attention ! Vive Louis XVIII. ! ’

But La Beauce gravely answered : ‘ If thou thinkest as thou dost thou hadst better have remained away. The King’s name is not one to conjure with here. The expression of such sentiments anywhere but in this house may lead thee to prison. The First Consul has earned the gratitude of the nation. After all, whom have you *émigrés* got to replace these men ? There is no one amongst you whose name is even known in France. As for me, I own I consider the present state of things preferable to that of the old *régime*. ’

St. Aubray looked doubtfully at his cousin and whistled to himself, he then nodded his head knowingly. ‘ Thou wast always a cautious man, Etienne,’ he said, and in truth he firmly believed that his cousin was only dissembling his sentiments.

But, Royalist though he was, St. Aubray quickly threw himself into the gaieties of Paris. He was a lively young gentleman, full of the accomplishments of the old *régime*. No ball was complete without him, and even the great M. de Trénis acknowledged, ‘ His dance is full of life and force. He has the advantage over me in the eight first measures of the “Gavotte de Panurge.” Of that there is no doubt. But in the *jetés—heim* ? Oh, there, *par exemple*, I smash him ; in general, he may be said to overwhelm me in the spring but I crush him in grace.’

To Célimène this young man extended his patronage. He never suspected her engagement, so great was his self-sufficiency, nor did Célimène succeed in undeceiving him. He had been a warm admirer of the little girl he had left at the Château in 1792 ; and he flattered himself that the impression he had then

made could never be entirely effaced. He even looked to the possibility, in some future time, when he should have tired of the pleasures of Paris, and the King be back again, of making himself the husband of this charming creature, whose laughing *badinage* he believed to be a tribute to his conquering graces.

'François,' asked Célimène one day, 'what will you do when I marry?'

'I suppose,' he answered, 'I must then settle down.'

Célimène laughed merrily. 'There will be no occasion,' she cried.

'Thou wast ever the best of women,' said St. Aubray, regaining his cheerfulness which the prospect of matrimony seemed to cloud.

'I intend to marry a good honest soldier, like the General Lannes you admire,' explained Célimène.

'Thou lovest a joke, Célimène.'

'But it is true.'

'Impossible! What should I do?'

'You? You could dance and flirt more than ever.'

'Ah, yes! to be sure.' And St. Aubray seemed consoled by the idea. He no more believed Célimène was in earnest than he believed in his cousin Etienne's sincerity.

However, the day came when he was undeceived. One morning on arriving at his cousin's house he found a stranger sitting there, who seemed quite at home.

'François,' said La Beauce, 'let me present my old comrade in arms, General Tamplin.'

St. Aubray bowed, was charmed, &c. Tamplin smiled. He was little used to the young *incroyables* of the Parisian *salon*, and the sight was new to him.

'François,' said Célimène, putting her hand on his shoulder, 'you remember I told you I intended to marry a good honest soldier; this is the one I have chosen.'

St. Aubray looked from her to Tamplin with astonishment.

'But me? What about me?' he asked.

'You shall dance with me, and flirt with anyone you like,' answered Célimène, with difficulty repressing her laughter. 'After all, my dear François,' she added gravely, 'you are not one of those intended for marriage. It would be a bold woman who would undertake to break you to double harness, and I am much too flighty myself to undertake the task.' With that she dropped him a mocking curtsey, and, taking the arm of Tamplin, led him away.

St. Aubray stood motionless. Virginie, who had always a feeling for those in distress, came to him and strove to console him.

'I could understand,' he said, 'her taking up with a good-looking young man; I could understand that, for I have been remiss in my attention. I own it now—but with such a man? It passes my comprehension. Is it, perchance, you,' he cried, turning to Virginie, 'who have persuaded her to do this?'

'My dear François,' said Virginie, 'I honour and respect General Tamplin; but in this affair I have left Célimène to judge for herself, and, much as I approve her choice, I have never said a word to her on the subject.'

'Women,' said St. Aubray with most comic emphasis. 'Women are bad judges.'

'It is not for thee to say so,' said La Beaute kindly. 'Thou, who art the adored of the ladies of Paris, shouldest be more tolerant towards them.'

'That's true.' Here St. Aubray looked at himself in a large mirror that hung in the room.

'And if Célimène has the bad taste to prefer her general,' added La Beaute, 'what is the loss to thee? Thou canst spare one admirer from the throng!'

'*Parbleu!*' cried St. Aubray, who seemed to beam beneath the flattery bestowed on him.

'And,' said Virginie, 'even you, a Royalist, must confess that liberty has charms when one is young. I saw you yesterday in a *wiski* which I am sure no wife would allow her husband to enter.'

'No! Did you remark my horse? There isn't another like him in Paris! What action! What fire!'

'What is his name?' asked La Beaute.

'Monarque.'

'Thou shouldest call him Mirabeau, with his fire and action he will some day upset thee.'

'Mirabeau? Excellent! He shall be called Mirabeau, and I will drive him. He is not so difficult to drive, he has a tender mouth.'

'I recommend thee to keep it shut for fear of accidents.' So did St. Aubray completely forget his cousin in talking about himself.

The preparations for the marriage now began in earnest. What need to describe the *corbeille*, with the monogram in gold. Mademoiselle l'Olive had been entrusted with this charge. Who but she could have turned out such a triumph? Was she

not *lingère* to Madame Bonaparte? In this *corbeille* Tamplin had placed cashmeres of great value, and many pieces of stuff brought from Egypt. Gloves and fans innumerable, with bottles of scent from Targeon, sachets of Spanish leather full of herbs from Montpellier. In fact, the trousseau was complete, and nearly equalled that of Madame Pauline, the youngest sister of the First Consul, who had just married General Murat.

CHAPTER LXXI.

AT THE TUILLERIES.

THE Comte de la Beaute, as a supporter of the Government, had felt it his duty to pay his respects to the head of the state, General Bonaparte. He, therefore, attended one of the reviews that so frequently took place in the Place Carrousel, which at that time was small and irregular in shape. La Beaute had donned his uniform, and with that he had no difficulty in getting near the saluting point. As the clock struck twelve the First Consul appeared surrounded by a brilliant staff, among whom was the Comte's old friend Junot. Bonaparte mounted his white charger (*Désiré*), rode down the rank, and the troops then marched past. No longer was the army neglected, every article of dress was in good order and clean. The men marched with precision, showing the highest discipline. After this simple parade, the General-in-chief dismounted and walked down the ranks, conversing with many of the officers, and even the men, inquiring into their grievances and giving his orders on the spot to the Minister of War and the general of the corps, who were following him.

La Beaute, in spite of himself, was much interested. As General Bonaparte passed him he saluted; but, though the salute was returned, no sign of recognition appeared in the piercing eye of the young conqueror. He seemed to be intensely occupied with his military duties, and to have no thought for anything else. The parade being over, the Comte was on the point of withdrawing, when Junot, leaving the group of officers of the staff, came to him.

'Welcome, my dear general,' cried he to La Beaute, offering his hand. 'I am indeed glad to see you. Are the ladies well? So mademoiselle is to be one of ours. A lucky dog, Tamplin.'

La Beauce returned Junot's warm greeting, and assured him that his wife and Célimène were in excellent health.

'I came,' he said, 'to offer my homage to the First Consul. Perhaps, my friend, you can inform me of the proper way of doing so?'

'Ah, you thought he did not recognise you just now,' cried Junot with a laugh. 'The general sees everything. It was he that sent me to you to bid you come to him, as he would be glad to talk with you.'

As they advanced towards the entrance of the Tuilleries, where the First Consul was just entering, Junot inquired :

'What think you of our children? They are different from your "bare-feet," eh?'

La Beouce was warm in his congratulation. So talking, they entered the palace, and, almost before he was aware of it, the Comte found himself in the presence of Bonaparte.

The conqueror of Italy and Egypt, the victor of Marengo, was somewhat changed from the discontented frequenter of the Café de la Nation. He was sleeker, fatter, and much more carefully dressed than before. But there was the same keen look in the eye, the same set expression in the mouth, when he turned towards La Beouce from giving an order to General Duroc.

'Ah! This is well! I heard you were in Paris, and am glad you have condescended to come to see an old friend whose last advances you so foolishly repulsed.'

There was a grave, almost displeased look in Bonaparte's face as he spoke. From earliest times he could ill brook a refusal, and if he sometimes forgave, he never forgot.

'General,' replied the Comte, 'I am anxious to pay my respects to the man chosen by my countrymen as their chief, and to assure him of my poor support in his efforts to preserve order in France.'

General Bonaparte disliked long speeches.

'I understand,' cried he, interrupting. 'So you came to my review though you refused to serve with me? What thought you of my brave children? Very different from the army of Flanders, eh?'

'They are the same men,' answered La Beouce calmly, 'but the country since then has learnt to appreciate them. Thanks to you, general.'

Bonaparte took the pinch of snuff he had been preparing during his questions. It was with a smile he spoke.

'Well, you are probably right there. Messieurs,' he cried, turning to the officers in the room, 'this gentleman, you see here for the first time, has performed a feat none of you will ever equal, not even you, Murat. He commanded a regiment of cavalry that captured a fleet! And yet,' here he frowned, 'he refused to join us in Italy.'

'General,' answered La Beaute, 'I have seen and admired your children to-day. If at any time you came down to La Beaute and saw mine, you would understand why I sacrificed my love of glory and my desire to serve under so distinguished a general to what I thought my duty.'

Bonaparte looked at him for a minute, balancing himself on his little legs.

'Perhaps,' he said, and rather rudely turned his back and began talking to one of his staff.

The *amour propre* of La Beaute might have been hurt, had not one of the generals present at that moment approached him.

'F——, comrade,' cried he, 'give me your hand. It was a proud feat you performed that day!'

The general's words were delivered with a vigour much increased by the oaths with which he garnished his conversation, in which respect he even outdid Tamplin in his days of bachelorhood. But there was an immense cordiality in his tone of greeting, which gave La Beaute great pleasure. Junot, who had come to support his old friend, introduced him as General Lannes.

The other military men also came to offer their congratulations, Murat alone holding aloof, so that the conversation became lively and interesting. A few minutes after, when La Beaute looked round, he found General Bonaparte had retired.

The same day, however, there arrived a letter for General and Madame la Beaute and Mlle. de la Rosière from Madame Bonaparte containing an invitation to one of her small evening receptions. To this the three went.

It was about ten o'clock when they arrived at the door of the Pavillon de Flore. At the door they were received by the two aides-de-camp on duty, General Duroc and Colonel Rapp, and conducted to the large reception room, which was then furnished with yellow damask, without any of the gold ornaments that afterwards found their way into the decoration. The room was lit by several clusters of lights; but, as they were covered with light gauze, there was a kind of rich, even half-obscurity, throughout the vast apartment.

Virginie, calm and dignified, could not but feel slightly nervous at renewing her acquaintance with one who was already viewed as the Arbiter of Europe. As for poor Célimène, her agitation was so great, that even the whispered encouragement of General Tamplin could hardly reassure her. There were several ladies in the room and some men. But, standing before the fire, balancing himself to and fro with a movement very common to him, stood Bonaparte himself.

'Ah, Madame la Beauce,' cried a graceful lady rising from a chair by the fireside and advancing to meet Virginie with outstretched hands and kissing her on either cheek, 'I am indeed charmed that you have been able to come to me. And you, too, Mlle. Célimène, Bonaparte told me you were in Paris, and that the general had been to see him. I remember with pleasure your friendship for me, and that of M. La Beause.'

'Ta, ta, ta,' cried Bonaparte without moving from his place before the fire. 'Madame is no friend of ours. It was she, I am sure, that prevented the general from giving France the service I demanded from him. Own to it, Madame. And you, Mam'selle Célimène, I've no doubt you aided and abetted her.'

Virginie had felt the eye of the General on her from the moment she had entered the room. But she proudly returned his glance as she swept a curtsey before him.

'Monsieur le Premier Consul gives me too much honour,' she said in a sweet low voice. 'My husband in such matters is wont to act for himself.'

Napoleon smiled, and when he did so his face seemed to light up, 'Old friends, Madame, should preserve more cordial feelings. See, I myself am full of forgetfulness.' Here he offered his hand, then, turning to La Beause, 'You, general, wish to be a regular Cincinnatus, a "Général Agricole"? Well, to every one his own way of looking at his duties. Tell me now, general, in your department—where I hear you are quite a little king, though, for that matter, kings must not exist in France—the Republic is still not viewed with much cordiality?'

La Beause answered, and a conversation arose, in which he found that the First Consul was gathering from him all the information he could extract. He was astonished at the knowledge already acquired by him. He seemed to know the extent of the La Beause property, what had been done there, what was planned or commenced. He entered thoroughly into La Beause's schemes, and even suggested some improvements.

'You are surprised,' he said, 'that I should have occupied myself so much about your affairs. I do not forget old friends, and, although you refused me as a chief, I have that respect for you that I have made a point of following you in your country life.'

La Beauce was touched. 'Believe me, General,' he said, 'there is no one in France who has watched your glories with greater interest than I have. Nor has anyone, even amongst those attached to your person, a greater admiration for what you have already achieved.'

'I believe you,' answered Napoleon. 'I only wish I could persuade more of your friends of the Faubourg St. Germain to think like you.'

Meanwhile Madame Bonaparte had presented Célimène to her charming daughter Hortense and her son Eugène, a remarkably handsome and bright-looking young man, who was resplendent in the uniform of a colonel of the 'Guides.' The young people formed a little knot together and chatted and laughed, though in a subdued key. Madame Bonaparte returned to her chair, near which one was placed for Virginie, and resumed her embroidery, at which she trifled with the indolent grace natural to her. Ill-natured people affirmed that she so occupied herself in imitation of Marie Antoinette, but that most of the work was done by the more expert hand of Mlle. Dubuquoy. The old charm that had attracted Virginie to this lady when they shared the same cell together in the prison of 'Les Carmes' was still to be found in her, the change in her fortunes had but added to her courteous manners and winning grace. Virginie, who watched her, both on this occasion and afterwards, fancied that she stood in great awe of her husband, who was sometimes very abrupt, and even brutal to his wife. She was no doubt much his inferior in intellect, and in many things was distressingly wanting in straightforwardness. She had, moreover, all the indolence of a Creole. But in doing the honours of her palace, and in consideration for her guests, she afforded a bright contrast to her illustrious spouse. To Virginie she was overwhelmingly polite, and if her conversation was not brilliant, it was at least full of ease and refinement, calculated to please and even captivate by its simplicity and want of affectation.

In the midst of her laughing confidences with Hortense Beauharnais, Célimène felt someone pinch her ear. She started and turned to find the First Consul by her side.

'Ah! Mam'selle Célimène, thou hast gained the affection of

Hortense already,' he cried, laughing. ' And thou hast captivated that brave lad Tamplin. Little witch ! ' here he pinched her again. ' Thou makest him believe anything ; yet, he is a most obstinate fellow, for nothing will persuade him that the finest cavalry officer in the army is not a certain *ci-devant* Comte de la Beauce.' Célimène, red with pain, answered,

' I have always found General Tamplin right.'

' Ah ! Mam'selle Célimène, keep to that opinion and thou wilt have a happy life. When is the marriage to take place ? '

' In three days, monsieur.'

' I shall not forget.' Nor did he. On the morning of the marriage Colonel Rapp brought a neat case, with the monogram of the newly-married lady engraved thereon, and in it was a handsome diamond necklace from General and Madame Bonaparte.

CHAPTER LXXII

AND LAST.

CÉLIMÈNE'S marriage was honoured with the presence of all the chiefs forming what Napoleon called his ' Military family.' They had learnt to esteem honest Antoine Tamplin, and were glad to give him their support in this most the venturesome of his many engagements. Junot—himself about to be married to young Mlle. Permon—Lannes, Bessières, Duroc, Rapp, Eugène Beauharnais, were there. Who does not know their names ? Many were the praises lavished on the happy bride. Many the hearty congratulations bestowed on the bridegroom. France seemed young again and full of gaiety. As during the terrible years of the Revolution, the Terror, and the reaction, the leaders of the nation were all young men ; so now all these were young and full of confidence and hope. Familiar and coarse among themselves, these great soldiers were courteous and subdued to her. The roughest warrior humbled himself before Virginie, who moved among them with the dignity of a princess. Napoleon himself, when she and her husband went down to Malmaison after the marriage, declared she was the only beautiful woman he had ever met who made him feel good. To Célimène she felt like an elder sister, and as she kissed her before she left her house with the man of her choice, she shed tears.

'My dearest,' she whispered, 'what matters it that we have suffered so much together? Is there not joy for thee in the future? Love thy husband, and may Heaven send thee others to love also.'

'May I love them as thou hast loved thine!' whispered Célimène.

Little Jacques, now a fine lad of ten or eleven years old, was present, of course, at the marriage of his old playmate. But, sad to state, the presence of all the fine young generals and colonels made him quite forget everything else. Junot, who was an old friend, good-naturedly took the lad round and introduced him to every one present. Before the day was out he had been offered a place on the staff of a dozen general officers, and had quite determined that the army was the only career fit for a lad of spirit. When he told his determination to his mother, whom he adored, he was surprised to see how grave she looked.

'But, *petite mère*,' cried the boy, 'why not? These generals are the bravest in the army, father told me so. They have fought in a hundred battles, and so has father, and they are so beautiful in their golden uniforms. I must be a soldier, *chérie*, and the boy fondly kissed his mother's soft cheek.

'Did any of these generals mention Kléber or Desaix?'

'No, mother; but I know who they were, they were killed. But what a glorious thing to be killed for one's country, and for glory!' It was the mother's turn to kiss her boy. He but echoed the cry of all France. Was not the nation drunk with glory? Full of its new youth, with a man of bronze at the helm of the State, whose great object it was to encourage the national enthusiasm. When men rose from the ranks to be the envied of all, what wonder if France rang with the shout *Vive la gloire*.

But to Virginie came back the ravings of her father. 'No peace, no quiet. Always bloodshed, always! always!' She seemed to see again the streets as they were under the Terror, empty and deserted, yet resplendent with tricolours and full of placards inscribed with the words 'Liberty, Equality, Fraternity, or Death.' Those streets were gay now with crowds of passers-by, the shops full of handsome goods. What of Liberty was there, or Equality? There appeared to her to be only the alternative—Death, now concealed under the halo of glory! Was her dear one to join the mad dance, in which glory gave the measure, but whose end was death?

What wonder, then, if tears were in her eyes as she kissed her boy?

Paris, however gay, was full of sad reminiscences to Virginie. Many places were there to which she made pilgrimages. She went to the Café de la Grande Nation, now called a restaurant, where Pierre was still reaping a golden harvest. He had taken unto himself a wife, who now presided at the *comptoir* where Virginie and Célimène had so often sat. This lady looked doubtfully at Virginie when she entered, and was received with too great demonstration of admiration by her husband. But Virginie gained her heart by praising a chubby little boy, who was beating a drum by the *comptoir*, in whom she recognised a likeness to Pierre, nor did she object to show Madame la Comtesse the little apartment where now lodged Monsieur and Madame Pierre Gosselin. Virginie looked into the room where poor Jacques had died. There was nothing left now that reminded her of him. The cot of the little Gosselin boy occupied the place of the bed her father died in.

'See, madame,' cried Pierre, 'the apartment is already too small for us; we shall turn it into small *salons* for the restaurant, and Marie and I will take the larger apartment *au premier*.' So had Pierre prospered.

Then she went to the prison of Les Carmes. It was no longer a prison but a barrack, and smart-looking soldiers hung out their accoutrements to dry at many windows, which had been newly pierced in the blank wall of the old convent.

She sought out, too, the house formerly inhabited by poor Rousselet. The numbers had been altered by order of the new police, so that she paused uncertain. A young man, clad in a smart soldier's uniform, attracted her attention as he lounged before one of the doors whistling a martial air.

'May I ask,' she said, 'which house was formerly No. 4?'

The youth stopped his whistling and stared at his questioner.

'This was No. 4,' he answered. 'Madame searches for someone? My mother has been *concierge* for fourteen years, and I have known all the *locataires* myself. Can I then give Madame the information she requires?'

'Was it not here,' asked Virginie, 'that a certain Charles Rousselet lived in the year II.?'

A quick look shot from the bright eyes of the young man—a look in which cunning and intelligence were mingled.

'*Sapristi!*' he cried. 'It is madame, the daughter of Citoyen

Le Blanc. Citoyen Rousselet ! I knew him well ! He used to take me to the Café de la Grande Nation and buy me cakes. *Diable !* how good they were after the bread of the section ! I saw Citoyen Rousselet carried off, and I may be bold enough to say he was a brave man. How he stepped up the ladder of the scaffold when his turn came ! It was a pleasure to see him ! We've changed all that now,' added Victor, whose quick instinct told him that his interesting details were distasteful to his hearer. ' *Vive la gloire !* I join the army next week !'

' I trust you will succeed in your profession,' said Virginie.

' Do we not all carry generals' commissions in our knapsacks ? Is not General Bonaparte our leader ? '

Virginie bade him adieu, and with a sorrowful look at the house turned away.

She one day made a pilgrimage with La Beauce and her son to Sèvres. There, too, was a change. The old town had shrunk to half the size, and already the walls of the well-known inn, formerly so clean and well-looked-after, were acquiring the neglected look common to their poorer neighbours. Virginie climbed to her old room. How changed was that ! The parquet floor was still there, but carpetless ; in the corner of the bedroom was a common bed with its furniture far from clean ; in the sitting-room, that triumph of dainty furnishing, there was absolutely nothing but a dilapidated *armoire*, on the shelf of which stood a few bottles and broken glasses. She looked forth on the river and distant Paris. That view, at least, seemed unchanged. The river glinted among the trees and houses as of old ; and Paris itself, with the afternoon sun ablaze on its buildings, looked much the same as it had done twelve years before, under Louis XVI. It made her sad to think of all that had passed away since then. Had France so changed ? What had they now that they had not formerly ? What had those who had suffered as she had done learnt by this suffering ? She had longed formerly to know Paris and understand something of events ; now she did know, was she the better ? As a young girl, watching the changes of nature from bud to leaf and flower, and then again to bare bough, she had formed a high ideal of man, made in the image of his Creator and placed in God's beautiful world to do great things. How had her ideal stood companion with reality ? Saddened by these thoughts, she placed her hand tenderly on her husband's shoulder.

' Etienne,' she said, ' I weary of Paris and sigh for the quiet

of our Château. Let us return there and strive to do what good we can to our friends. In Paris I feel lost amid the whirl of fashion, and sad when all seem to laugh around. I am not old, but yet find I all here too young. Let us go then.'

La Beauce, nothing loth, took her back home, and thus they lived during all the mad time of France's glory, save when Napoleon, having instituted the new order of the 'Légion d'Honneur,' and declared himself Emperor by the suffrages of his subjects, an official letter arrived, addressed to the Comte de la Beauce, conferring upon him the Grand Cross of the order, and nominating him one of the chamberlains of the Court. At the same time Virginie was appointed one of the ladies-in-waiting to the Empress.

'You remember,' said Josephine with a smile when the new lady-in-waiting came to pay her respects, 'the appointment was made some years ago, but the Emperor will, I fear, not permit me to antedate it lest I should move the envy of the others.'

With every desire to be grateful, the Comte and Comtesse de la Beauce were very soon wearied by their court duties, and were glad enough when they were allowed to consider them merely honorary.

Once again they came to Paris to present their son, who through the favour of Eugène Beauharnais was appointed on the staff of the future Viceroy of Italy, and gloried with all the youth of France in the victories that still graced the course of Napoleon.

With these victories and the disasters that followed it is not the purpose of this story to deal. The best friends part, the longest chronicle must have an end; and with the return to the quiet of country life we bid adieu to our hero and heroine. Such peace and happiness as could be gained by the unquiet rule of Napoleon these two enjoyed. Saddened by the great trials and excitements of the Revolution, La Beauce was a supporter of a strong rule. Like his friend Riouffe, he had seen the triumph of disordered ambitions too closely to be caught by the tawdry claptrap of high-sounding phrases. [Riouffe became préfet of a department under Napoleon, thereby incurring the reproaches of his enthusiastic Republican friends. These 'enragés,' as Napoleon called them, were of the same type as the extreme Royalists. If the latter lived in the times of Louis XV., these upheld the Constitution of '93; the one were as unyielding in their obstinacy as the other. Exile taught neither tolerance; success brought no feeling of moderation. But while the Royalists, with a certain

gaiety, sought each other's society and bore their troubles with grace, the Regicide Conventionnels lived, we are told, like 'old wild boars (*vieux sangliers*) who abandon the companions of their youth to live in solitude.' These men carried their hate with them even to their graves. M. Quinet gives an account of Genevois: 'Feeling himself near death at Vevey, he called his servant. 'When I am dead,' he said to him, 'and the Bourbons are dethroned, thou shalt come to my tomb and strike two blows with thy stick thereon and cry "*Monsieur, nous les avons chassés!*"'

Can it be said that the France of to-day has forgotten the hatred of the past? Has Liberty been gained after the succession of masters who have ruled here, or has tolerance of opposition been learnt? The Republic has come once more. Is it the Republic of Jean Jacques? And has the tale of heads demanded by Marat been completed?

THE END.

The Decay of Canine Fidelity.

WE are wont to regard the dog as the perfect embodiment of fidelity, and on the whole the good opinion of his character has been justified. The saying of the German pessimist that he would cease to believe in truth but for the assurance of his dog's eye is a striking tribute to the species. But even Ouida herself, one supposes, would hardly claim this excellence for every member of the canine family. We are apt to forget that the instinct of attachment was developed comparatively late in the history of the species. The dog is by nature unattached and vagrant, and only becomes attached and faithful by an infusion of human grace. Hence the comical spectacle one sometimes sees in the streets—a well-meaning but misguided youth attempting to keep a loosely-inclined pup close to his heels. And not a few members of the species appear to remain in this unregenerate state in mature years. Anybody who has lived in a small town knows the vagabond street dog. Nobody seems to know how he disposes of himself at night, but during the day he lives on friendly terms with most of the errand boys and other frequenters of the streets. His tail has a wag of recognition for every familiar face, and he will even sidle up to a stranger now and again with an artful simulation of sudden and overpowering affection. But if you attempt to decoy him far from his habitual haunts the vagrant nature asserts itself, and after another bit of excellent acting in the shape of feigned reluctance to say good-bye, he trots leisurely back to his favourite resort. Such dogs are commonly ill-bred in more senses than one. They have no doubt lost their primitive savageness. They assume a friendly aspect towards man in general, but they have no heart, and prefer the streets to the woods simply because they offer a more tempting hunting-ground.

From the ordinary type of vagabond which is always getting lost, and but for the policeman would permanently take to the

streets, we must distinguish the true rover or fickle-minded dog. He has the instinct of attachment, but does not permit himself to be dominated by it. His affections are not long fixed on any human object : of him as of most men it may be said, *variatio delectat*. He gets lost by his owner not because he has become a street wanderer, but because he has found a new abode elsewhere. He is characterised by a wheedling ingratiating manner, a good deal of self-confidence and acuteness in the discrimination of patrons. He has astutely observed that the first warmth of affection is most fruitful of favours, and he attaches himself to a house just as long as he is made much of. When this first cordiality of treatment begins to fall off he makes overtures of attachment to some new proprietor ; and such is the amount of general goodwill towards dogs, that he rarely fails to find a new home.

Not long since I had an excellent opportunity of observing one of these rovers. I am not learned in canine varieties, but should suppose he was some kind of mongrel terrier. Anyhow, he was an odd little creature, with body decidedly long in proportion to the legs, with a grey and brownish coat, which was so thin as to give him a mangy look, and lastly with a moist sentimental eye. If dogs had their religious sects, one would set him down as a Methodist. He belonged with two other dogs to a friend of mine, who used to bring them to my house when picking me up on his morning walk. The odd little creature contrasted strongly with another of the trio, who was about his own size, in the sedateness of his manner and his philosophic indifference to small canine worries. Thus it was not uncommon to see his companion mentally upset by the sight of a butcher's cart proceeding, as he no doubt thought, at an indecorously wild pace. Or his usual serenity would now and again be rudely broken by the appearance of a cat, or even that apparently harmless creature the cat's victim, the sparrow, which he would pursue in a frenzy of rage, leaping in impotent wrath underneath the tree to which the nimble little creature would naturally betake itself for shelter. None of these things moved our canine philosopher. He paid not the slightest heed to his comrade's violent rushings and barkings. As became a thinker, his voice was rarely heard. I have seen him set upon by his more mercurial companion in a fit of obstreperous jocosity, yet with admirable self-restraint he would suffer himself to be barked at, knocked against, and even scrambled over, without uttering the slightest protest. It occurred

to me that, like a recent British logician, he found the racket of the street favourable to philosophical abstraction.

I was surprised to find on questioning my friend that so demure and serious looking an animal was a rover. He had, it appears, been found on my friend's door-step, and taken into the house from motives of charity, in the belief that he was not only a destitute waif, but the victim of cruel tyranny. This last idea seems to have been suggested by some unwholesome-looking patches on his body. This first favourable opinion of the creature had been modified by subsequent experiences. In spite of all the kindness shown him he had a most inconvenient habit of going off suddenly and without any warning on a roaming expedition. At first these disappearances were wrapt in mystery, but gradually it came out that he paid visits to the various houses he was in the habit of frequenting with his owner. He seems to have had the happy knack of sniffing out the house where he would be made most of, and after having had enough of the delights of change, he would return to the temperate welcome that always awaited him at his old and permanent home.

Soon after I had an opportunity of observing this curious roving propensity. My friend called one morning after breakfast, and as usual brought in his handsome collie, leaving, as he thought, the other two small fry in the garden. The younger members of the family were busy entertaining the collie with sundry dainty morsels, when all at once, to everybody's surprise, our little philosopher appeared on the scene. He had a look of half-protest, half-shame, that was very comical. His owner told me he very much resented having to play second fiddle to the collie. Even philosophers, it appears, can be envious, and the little creature before us had very much the expression of envy as he watched the various tit-bits disappearing down the collie's capacious throat. An impulse of compassion moved me and I threw him a morsel from the table. His filmy eye turned to me with a look of singular tenderness.

I understood the meaning of that look a couple of hours afterwards, when sitting writing in my study, I glanced out of the window and saw the rover coming up the long garden path, now slowly and hesitatingly, now more briskly as if encouraging himself in a laudable effort. He had, it was evident, in that moment of my weakness, recognised a new opportunity. My family circle had impressed him as fond and indulgent, and, what was more, it was not marred by the presence of a rival favoured by Nature

with greater physical attractions than his own. Here was precisely the asylum for an unappreciated and harassed philosopher. I tried to look very angry as I went out to drive him away, but his penetrating eye saw through the pretence. After a make-believe of running down the path, he would suddenly stop, turn and fix his bleared eye on me and wag his stump of a tail jocosely, as if he perfectly understood that we were acting a little play. I could not repress a laugh, and this, of course, encouraged him in regarding the whole performance as a joke. He renewed these attempts for some days with a persistence worthy of a better cause. It was only when I had schooled myself to put on my sternest of manners that he gave up the enterprise as hopeless.

This dog set me musing. As his lachrymose eye suggested, he was an animal of much feeling. And yet he was preternaturally sagacious. His mode of life had evidently been thought out in as careful and philosophic a way as that of Epicurus himself. He reasoned that for him at least the *summum bonum* consisted in a judicious mixture of permanence and change, uniformity and variety. Others before him had reached the same conclusion. But his originality cannot be questioned. He had evidently thought out the problem of canine felicity for himself, and without the least help from human philosophers. And his solution of the problem has much to recommend it. To have found his way to a conception of life that seems to combine the maximum of pleasurable excitement with the minimum of anxiety argues a more than usual intelligence. I felt at once that so reflective an animal must not be confounded with the unevolved, unattached vagabond. He is not, like this last, incapable of attachment; on the contrary, he attaches himself a great deal, and, as most people would say, too much. But in his case the instinct of attachment has become controlled by conscious intelligence. His instinct compels him to seek a human protector, but he is shrewd enough to see to it that the alliance turn out to his own advantage.

I am quite willing to allow that this type of dog is not particularly lovable. We naturally love and prize our dog companions for their disinterested devotion. According to our ethical code the sum and substance of canine virtue is to know his master and to stick to him. But this latest development of the canine character is self-seeking, incapable of true devotion, and cynically veiling a far-sighted egoism under the semblance of ardent attachment. Shrewd, intelligent he may be; but who would care for a dog without a heart?

I am not going to try to make out that the new type of light-minded rover is a morally noble being. Very likely he is in point of character unworthy of his long-suffering and loyal ancestors. But at least we may try to understand how he has become morally deteriorated. Dogs are, after all, not created expressly for man's comfort, and it may be as well, perhaps, to study this latest phase of dog character in the light of his own circumstances and needs. If, following the fashion of modern inquiry, we substitute for the ethical the historical point of view, and ask how the dog in this latest stage of his development has come to take on his roving habits, we may find a very simple explanation of the seemingly ignoble trait.

Now the first thing to be clear about here is that our expectation of canine devotion belongs to an order of things which seems passing away. When the dog was of real service to man, for defence, sport, or what not, and was valued as such, and when moreover he depended for his maintenance solely on the consideration of his lord and master, it was natural that he should attach himself to this one being with perfect singleness of devotion. The circumstances closely resembled the feudal relations of protector and servant which developed the loyal attachment of a Caleb Balderston. The dog, like the human domestic, felt that he was of consequence, that he was prized for sterling qualities, and he answered the appreciation with a veneration so deep and overpowering as almost to make a modest man feel something of a humbug. The daily contact with the members of the one household, the constant association of his comforts and his active pleasures with these, and the isolation from all outsiders, may well be supposed to have generated the characteristic traits of the dog at his best, the cleaving of the whole heart to his lord and master, and the viewing of other men with suspicion and a certain animosity.

How all this is altering nowadays it is easy to see. I do not, of course, overlook the fact that in the country many dogs are still owned by shepherds, sportsmen, and others, who, to use the expression of a friendly critic of this essay, have 'a definite business in life.' Nevertheless, one may safely say that the large majority of dogs are kept nowadays not because of any service they render, but for the sake of their appearance. Like the link-holders still to be seen above the doorway of certain London houses, what was once a utility is now preserved merely as an ornament. Theoretically, no doubt, even in

town-houses, people keep a dog as a means of defence, but in most cases they really value him as a decorative appendage. This applies particularly to the more handsome breeds —the St. Bernard, the collie, the mastiff, and the rest. Indeed, such are the strange diversities of human taste that even so unpromising a specimen of canine beauty as the bulldog will be sought after by the initiated for the sake of his good looks. And it is only fair to suppose that the discerning creatures recognise their new position in the scheme of things. May we not see, indeed, now and again in their mournful and downcast expression a conscious sense of degradation? Look, for example, at the nobly formed St. Bernard that gloomily follows the procession of fashionably dressed misses in the Park. Cannot the dullest observer perceive signs of an infinite boredom? His pensive and melancholy eye suggests that he has had full experience of the *tedium vitae*, and is a pessimist of the darkest shade.

While the grander sort of dog has thus been morally degraded by being turned into a useless lacquey, the breeds that have happened to suit the capricious and errant fancies of animal petters have undergone a still deeper deterioration. The sleek pug, for instance, on whom is often lavished such a wealth of feminine fondness, has long since become perfectly aware of his new function in the house. He knows he is the first pet, and he is perfectly happy in the fact. His mind seems untroubled by any recollection of a higher estate. He has lost the ancient desire of the species to be man's loyal servant. He may, perhaps, if you happen to call at the house, and find him in exclusive possession of the drawing-room, make a pretence at resisting your intrusion. But his Sybaritic habits are too much for him, and presently he sinks in voluptuous slumber on the softest of sofa cushions. These spoiled creatures learn to take the fondlings bestowed on them as a matter of course. They are wholly undemonstrative, and perhaps the most flattering thing that can be said of them is that, unlike their rival the cat, they do not simulate a tenderness of which their heart is wholly destitute.

One other consideration needs to be borne in mind in seeking to explain the decline of the old canine devotion. Not only is our modern dog learning to regard himself as a lacquey or a lap-pet, he is rapidly finding out that others besides his owner are ready to prize him just as highly. In our big towns he is daily brought into contact with the once-suspected stranger, who, on closer examination, turns out to be very much like his master,

wearing the same kind of coat and hat, and, what is of greater consequence, manifesting towards him very much the same friendly sentiments. Would it not be unreasonable under these circumstances to expect the animal to conserve his ancient monotheism and worship his master as supreme and unique? Let us not forget that we have made our domesticated quadrupeds intelligent, and that by introducing them into the conditions of modern life we are directly putting them into the way of seeing through their primitive illusion. The sagacious quadruped that in his daily rounds with master or mistress has ample opportunity of observing the general diffusion of good manners among men cannot be expected to go on venerating his master in the old naïve manner. He learns to take a juster view of mankind in general, and, overcoming his inveterate prejudices, is ready to enter into friendly negotiations with the stranger in the street. Our shrewd little philosopher, with his tepid attachment to one house, and his lively relish for the delights of change, seems to be precisely the kind of product that we may look for under these altered conditions.

The change should surprise us the less, seeing that it is closely similar to that which is going on in our relations to our human servants. With the breaking up of the ancient isolation of the home, with the freer movements and the larger experience of these latter days, our servants are by common consent losing all trace of their old tenacious fealty. They have passed out of their former condition of inherited status into one of free contract; and our little philosopher of the kennel is but following Susan of the kitchen when he exchanges the certain but tame satisfactions of permanence for the risky but exciting joys of change.

We have, rather fancifully as it may appear to some, assumed that the modern dog necessarily tends to grow less devoted and more of a rover through the workings of his own intelligent mind. Whether this be so or not, other causes which are certainly known to be in operation will suffice to effect the transformation. It is well known that the several varieties of dog have been developed by the process of human selection. Thus the sportsman wanted a dog to point, and the successive selections of generations have produced the pointer. Any considerable change in man's taste in the matter of dogs will tend to the selection of new physical and moral characters. It follows that the growing preponderance of the demand for canine ornaments and canine pets will inevitably

tend to intensify the qualities which satisfy this demand. That is to say, our domesticated breeds will become in the first place handsomer. Thus we may expect to see the collie put on a yet finer coat, the spaniel to develop a yet silkier ear, and so forth. As with the *physique* so with the *morale*. It will accommodate itself to the growing demand for pets by becoming more submissive and more amiable. The harsher elements of dog-nature will be gradually eliminated, and the old instincts of snapping, snarling, and biting will give place to a gentleness which will make the most profuse caressing a perfectly safe pastime. And the new type of canine character thus produced will necessarily be wanting in that intensity of devotion which characterised the older type. For the highest concentration of affection in dog and man alike seems to require as its base a certain degree of savageness of disposition. As the dog grows more generally amiable he will grow less partial, and so be incapable of a heart-absorbing attachment.

There are probably those who, while allowing the fact of the change here roughly indicated, might demur to its being regarded as a moral deterioration. They would contend that the dog is changing in much the same way as the man is changing, by acquiring in place of one or two narrow intense affections a widely diffused sentiment of humanity. They might even urge that the desire in a man for the undivided allegiance of a noble quadruped is the outcome of his egoism and his boundless conceit. There is no doubt much to suggest that the same current of evolution which is carrying civilised man onward to new phases of moral experience is bearing his brute dependents along with him. By domesticating the dog we have involved it in a measure in our own fate, and must expect to see it reflect our own transformations. Yet to frail human nature it is hard to look at the probable decay of canine fidelity as other than a serious loss. The world will surely be the poorer when there are no stories of the faithful Gelert and of him of whose fidelity Wordsworth sings to kindle the boy's heart. Our little canine philosopher, with his dominant egoism and his severe control of the affections, seems a very unpicturesque object by the side of the old-fashioned love-mastered hound. And if he represents the dog of the future, it may be safely said that, though we may succeed in liking him, and even paying him a certain measure of esteem, we shall not get our poets to immortalise his virtues.

J. SULLY.

Love in a Mist.

To M. W.

THERE is a little place called St. Sebald on the borders of a beautiful lake in the Tyrol. The village presses close down to the water, almost as if it were afraid of the mountains behind, which rise up and up, cutting the sky in jagged lines. One cannot help fancying that the people who live in the fresh white houses must be different from others. The deep greens and blues of the lake under the sun, and its wonderful silver lights under the moon, must surely gladden the eyes and hearts of those who watch them, and the rugged mountains are too near to let them forget that their lake lies far from the stars.

Even the travellers who come and bask here for a few days gain something of the peaceful and happy atmosphere, and leave their troubles and their jealousies behind the range.

Not many come, for the place is little known, and there are only two inns in the village. The better of these has a broad verandah hanging over the water, and the fishes swim right up to it, when people dining there are kind enough to throw little bits of bread to them. It is here that the steamer from Russbach lands new visitors, and takes away those who are going back to their town lives. On the balcony there is always some bustle and excitement, but a few yards away St. Sebald resumes its quiet, restful aspect, and the straggling street winds under one or two wide arches, past the inn, up by the old white church, and away till the houses are stopped by the mountains. Some stone steps turn off at right angles and lead into what should be the churchyard. But the church is built on the top of a steep rock, springing straight out of the water, and there is no space for graves or flowers, only for a kind of terrace

bounded on the left by a low white wall. Here, in old days, the monks from the ruined monastery close by used to walk, but they clearly did not wish to shut out all the beauties of water and mountain and sky, for they pierced the wall by a series of low broad arches, and made for themselves a wonderful gallery of pictures framed in white. The world seems wide enough here for any aspiration, and its beauty radiant enough to satisfy any longing ; but it is impossible to tell how the peculiar local influence is felt—whether it reaches the heart through the eyes or through the ears alone, or whether perhaps the very air itself may catch its character and breathe its peace or its sternness.

In one of the smallest houses of the village, nestling close under some trees by the lake, lived a man who could see none of these things, for he was blind.

He had lost his sight when only twelve years old, and till then had lived in the plains, so the only images left in his mind were of green stretches and shady trees. Mountains and lakes he had never known, but he built up his surroundings out of the material ready to his mind's eye, raising levels into hills, and spreading brooks into wide spaces of water. He could listen for hours to the ripple of little blue waves against his strip of garden, and knew why the wind never blew on his house from the back, but always swept over it from the front. He could tell the flight of a house martin from that of a swallow, and long before he had landed the fish pulling at his line, knew whether his prize was a carp or a trout.

His greatest joy lay in the myriad noises of nature, and his fine ear caught and delighted in as many gradations of sound as an artist could see in colour. The wind moving in the tree tops, the vague murmurs of the lake, the humming of little insects, the distant cries of children, all these he listened to and found in them a harmony ; and sometimes, when his fingers were wandering over the zither, he would play strange phrases, unlike all known music, but breathing a curious close companionship with the voice of nature. In his lonely life he had indeed listened more to her voice than to any other ; and she had taught him gently and with loving care, telling him many of her secrets which she withholds from those who might read her face if they would. He had begun learning his instrument, the zither, before he lost his eyes, and, in the misery which followed, the music he could make was his great consolation. After a time it became his support too, for Sebald, finding dependence on his

parents irksome, determined to gain his own livelihood. He travelled about the country with a singer, and they wandered far from home, earning money as they went. But the singer grew tired of the partnership, and when they reached the mountains suggested that his friend should stay behind at the next village. The blind man made no opposition, only stipulated that he should be allowed to choose where he would stop. When they walked into the village of St. Sebald, ‘This is the place for me,’ Sebald said to himself; ‘it must be meant so.’

His companion found lodgings for him, and with many promises to come and fetch him in the autumn, left him there with his share of their meagre profits, to get on as best he could. It was not difficult. The young man, with his tall slight figure and handsome face, had a strong attraction about him; and when he sat playing, with his head thrown back, his sensitive mouth showing between his golden beard and moustache, passers-by felt constrained to stop and listen; and when they listened, his cause was gained. Not that his music stirred the heart, or roused the mind, but there was a peculiar charm in it which held his hearers spell-bound. It was as if they actually saw the woods, and skies, and streams whose sounds he interpreted for them, and, hardly knowing why, forgot all the indoor part of their lives as they listened. The music was almost pagan, but it was fresh and it was clear. One other power he possessed; he could play chants and hymns as no one had heard them played before. The old familiar sounds rose in a pure impassioned flight as if from the heart of a bird, carrying no weight of earthly feeling with them. Very soon Sebald and his zither became quite famous in the village, and the landlord of the inn on the lake pressed him to play on the balcony whenever his guests were sitting there. The captain of the steamboat, too, invited him on board, hoping he might enliven the journey for the passengers. So gulden enough were put down beside him to keep him, summer and winter. He was happy, the sounds of the water were a revelation to him, everyone was kind to him. He learnt to fish contentedly for hours, and could find his way about from place to place with unerring step. He used to call himself Sebald of St. Sebald in his dreams, and wonder if he could compose a hymn to his patron saint.

Then a new thing came into his life. The daughter of his landlady in the village fell in love with him. She was a fair German girl, kind, good-hearted, gay, with a deep fund

of tender helpfulness in her nature. It was she who led Sebald about the place until he knew his way. It was she who cooked little tempting dishes for him when he was tired ; it was she who counted his money, and kept it for him. They grew to be firm friends.

One evening she told him that her mother had found a place for her as nursery-maid to some rich people in Russbach, and with that she burst out crying, and he suddenly understood that there was more in her tears than grief at leaving home.

Sebald was touched. He took her hand and told her he did not know how he should get along without her, but that he was blind, and little Afra was not for such as he. But Afra convinced him that he was wrong, and so he married her, wondering at her simple devotion, and loving her for the pity which had grown in her till it had become merged in love.

Ten years glided peacefully by. Sebald made more than enough money to keep himself and Afra and their little boy, and no misfortune came near them. Only sometimes he grew restless and wandered aimlessly, listening for fresh sounds, and feeling his soul move within him. He longed for he knew not what. Sometimes he fancied that if he could only see he would be satisfied, and yet he felt that his unrest lay far below his eyes. Afra would watch him sorrowfully. She did not understand, and yet she divined the reason of his sadness, and when he was sitting moodily silent, would bring little Alois to him, or tempt him to play again till the shadows passed away. He was always happiest in the summer, for then he talked to new people, and often someone would play to him, and so he planted fresh music in his memory which blossomed afterwards on his zither.

One evening early in August, when the sun had just sunk and a golden glow lay on the sky and water, two English ladies, with their maids and baggage, got off the boat. One was a middle-aged faded woman, who quite looked the part of maiden aunt to the vivacious little figure at her side—a young girl, with brown curly hair and blue eyes, which could be as sad and wistful sometimes as they were now bright and sparkling. She was looking about her with evident delight in the beauty of the place, and at the same time making all her arrangements without once referring to the elder lady who stood passively behind her. It was always like this. Celia was always the comet and Aunt Lucy the tail. Aunt Lucy never quite knew why they came abroad at

all, but she followed obediently, just as she listened in bewildered faith to her niece's conversation with the many friends who clustered round her. 'Celia is very clever,' she would say with a sigh, 'and nowadays girls have such advantages.' This vague phrase had a kind of comfort for her—it seemed to explain the situation.

Perhaps the situation did need an explanation, for Celia won her way into people's hearts with the strange confident quickness of a child. She had an intuition about men and women which was almost genius, so unerringly did she reach the quick and living side. In the light of her presence the flowers in every heart uncurled their closed petals, and sunned themselves; and as she gave her best without stint she gained their best from others in return. She moved those who loved her like the strain of a song, sad and soft, yet full of aspiration, and its echo sounded in their ears long after her voice was still.

Sebald was playing as usual on the balcony when she passed, and he heard her stop before him, and watch him silently for a few moments, and then move away. He felt that she had liked his music, and when a sweet low voice begged him to play again, he guessed who the speaker was. He played one of his strange unearthly melodies, and then another and another without stopping, for he knew she understood. When at last he finished, a little cool hand was laid on his, and she said, 'Thank you, thank you—it is very wonderful. How do you know it all if you cannot see? Why, the very colour of the water and the trees is there.'

Sebald could hardly answer her; many had listened before, many had praised him, but none had understood him like this; none had taken his hand.

'I am so happy to think you like it,' he said at last. 'I will play to you as often as you wish.'

She had got up from her seat and was standing close beside him. 'I am afraid I shall wish it very often,' she answered with a little laugh. 'Oh, I am so glad you are here! Good-night. Don't forget me; we shall meet again to-morrow.' And she was gone.

But he met her again that same evening, for, as he was fishing close by the inn, he heard the notes of a piano, and then the notes of a voice. He knew at once to whom it belonged, and it thrilled him as no voice—not even the beloved one of the water—had ever done. He listened entranced, the very spirit of music was speaking to him; here was all that he had ever wanted to express,

here was the soul of nature speaking to his soul, here was the mystery which he had never been able to translate.

What was it? Why could he hear, as she sang, not only all the myriad chords of nature, not only the solemnity of his own fervent worship, but something else more passionate, more human, more divine? He went home in an almost dazed state, and sat far into the night, with his head in his hands, and this time Afra could not guess the reason of his sadness.

Next day Celia came and talked to him again. She had been wondering, she said, how he learnt new music, for he did not always play his own compositions. Sebald answered her by playing the first few bars of her song of the night before, and Celia clapped her hands in delight.

'Did you hear me?' she cried, 'or did you know the song?'

'No, no,' he answered; 'and I do not know it now. I cannot remember it all. If only——' and he stopped shyly.

'Come upstairs with me,' said Celia, 'and I will teach you anything you like. My songs will sound much better on your zither than on my own squeaky little strings.'

Then she took his hand and led him into her room, and gave him a comfortable chair, with his zither on a table before him, and he forgot all about his daily trip on the steamboat, and stayed on, not playing much, but listening. Her voice was quite a small one, but it had a passionate ring in it which carried her hearers away with her into a land aglow with love and feeling, and Sebald followed her. He had never been there before, and it bewildered him. She ended by singing him a song, one of those rushing, fervent melodies, full of sweetness and force, which the Germans know so well how to write.

He had often played it himself, but he recognised now how little he had understood it. His familiarity with the melody only made her rendering of it ring in his ears with greater insistence. He could bear it no longer, the rush of new emotions overcame him, and he stood up, stretching out his arms with a helpless, imploring gesture. Celia came to him quickly, and took both his hands in hers. 'We shall be friends, you and I,' she said. 'We are made of the same bit of earth.'

Sebald was trembling, he could scarcely stand.

'Friends!' he said in a low voice. 'Friends! You and I can never be friends.'

Celia was half frightened at his tone, and began to laugh.

'Why not?' she said. 'I want to be friends with you, and

I always do what I want. 'Come,' she continued, giving him his hat and his zither, 'I am going to walk to your home with you. I want to know your wife and your little boy. You see I have been curious enough to find out all about you, and I even know your name—Sebald, like the saint.' All this time she was leading him down the stairs and out into the glaring sun. Did she know what she was doing? Perhaps not; but if she had known she might not have acted differently.

The sun was very hot, but she went on with him, asking him eager questions all the way, and telling him about herself; how she lived with her Aunt Lucy, and what an odd, independent life she led.

'I get tired of all the people sometimes,' she said, 'and then I make Aunt Lucy bring me to some little place like this.'

Sebald's home, as I have said, stood close to the lake. It was a small white house with a little strip of garden in front blazing with flowers. All the windows were gay with geraniums and fuchsias, and on the white walls were tall creepers with scarlet blossoms.

'Do you or your wife look after the garden?' cried Celia delightedly. 'I should like to live here.'

'Afra would tell you it was my work,' Sebald answered with a smile; 'she says I have a happy hand with flowers, but I could not do much without her.'

Afra now came out of the house, shading her eyes with her hands. She was evidently looking for her husband, and seemed very surprised to see him walking with Celia.

'Are you here, Afra?' said Sebald; 'I have brought someone to see you who wants to know you and little Alois.'

Afra came forward shyly, not knowing what to say; but Celia quickly put her at her ease. There is a stronger freemasonry between woman and woman than between man and man, and if two of them are left alone together they will touch each others' hearts long before men have finished discussing the weather.

Celia went with Afra into the small clean house and looked at everything, admired the kitchen, and stroked the cat, and put little Alois on her knee. Afra could not take her eyes off her. She had never seen anyone so beautifully dressed, or so pretty and gracious, and very soon found herself talking unreservedly to her guest. When Celia left them Afra could not praise her enough to Sebald.

'You cannot see her,' she kept saying, 'so you do not know
VOL. XVII. NO. XCVIII.

how pretty she is ; and such a lovely dress—it was silk right through. I saw it when she caught her fringe in the door. Did she pay you well, Sebald ?'

He did not answer. How could he tell her that it was impossible to think of Celia offering to pay him—how could he tell her they were friends ?

True to her word Celia insisted upon making friends with Sebald. With quick insight she had divined all the latent poetic side in the man, which hitherto had only expressed itself in his music, but which, roused by the touch of another mind, poured out a bright stream of fancy and imagination. But it was not Sebald alone who expanded under a new influence, for Celia had never before talked to anyone who understood her so absolutely, who answered so quickly to every mood of her thought, and she felt as if a new window had been opened for her.

Almost every day he played to her, and she often sang to him, but sometimes they only sat and talked together, and Sebald liked this best. He would tell her some of his dreams—fairy stories about stones and stars and spirits—till she felt his was the real world and hers the shadow.

' You are a poet,' she would say ; ' you see with your blind eyes far more than I do.'

Best of all, however, he liked to hear her talk ; and although he could never tell her why, it seemed to him that over every word she said her heart shed a purple radiance, and he longed to steep his whole nature in that colour. Everything he had not understood before grew clear to him now : he knew what had made him restless—he knew what was missing in his life as well as in his music.

And now for the first time the full despair of his blindness rushed upon him—that he should never, never see her face was an intolerable thought to him. He had loved the woods and streams without seeing them, and now he loved her without seeing her ; but this was so different—he felt that he must see her or die.

One day Celia proposed that they should all—Afra, Alois, and Aunt Lucy—go for a picnic together to some pine-woods near by. Aunt Lucy showed no enthusiasm till Celia pointed out to her the pleasure it would give the little family. Then she gave way. Celia hired a large carriage which took them all, and early in the afternoon the party set out. Sebald had never been so far since

he first settled down in the village, and was as much interested and excited as any of them. His wife sat opposite him with a beaming face, rejoiced to see him looking so happy. She had made Celia feel rather uneasy by bursting into expressions of gratitude over her kindness just before they started, and somehow, when Afra thanked her for having given Sebald so many pleasures, she longed to shut her ears.

In his twelve years of sight Sebald seemed to have stored up an inexhaustible fund of observation and experience. He had been a dreamy imaginative child, and the colours and shapes of the world had become a part of his consciousness. He knew how brilliant were the greens which felt cool and damp to the touch ; he knew how water gleamed when the sun fell upon it ; and now perhaps he knew by the quiet stillness how beautiful was the wood they reached. There were great pines rising up like shafts in a cathedral, and brilliant stretches of blue showing between the green pine-needles, while in the background mountains towered above them. Sebald was lying on the ground, drawing in draughts of the keen perfume of the trees, and listening to the noise the branches made as they talked to one another — a noise which seemed to him exactly like the lake when it was angry.

Afra and Aunt Lucy had wandered away with the child. Afra was explaining to the elder woman how frightened she had been lest her baby should be blind like his father, and Aunt Lucy was trying to persuade Afra to dose the boy with rhubarb whenever he was naughty. Neither understood the other very well, but they talked on.

When Celia and Sebald were alone he turned towards her : 'I have often told you stories before,' he said, 'and now I must tell you another.'

'Yes,' Celia answered, startled by the intensity of his tone, 'I am listening.'

'Once upon a time,' he began, in a low voice, 'there was a lake hidden in the deep recesses of a dark and angry mountain. It was so shut in between high walls of rock and overhanging cliffs that no steps ever came near its brink, no birds ever dipped their wings in its cool clear waters, no green trees bent lovingly over its still depths. The sun could not shine upon it by day, nor the moon by night, and the water was dark and black, for it was never flooded by light. Once, however, in the hot month of August, a star in the sky said to herself, "There is a night in

the year whén, if I lean a little more to the left, I can send my beams into that lonely water which is thirsting for light." So when the time came she made a way past the stern cliffs for one straight glorious shaft, down, down into the very heart of the deep lake. The water had been waiting so long, and was lying so still, that it had power to draw down the very star itself, and it seemed almost as if she had left her heaven for a time to bathe herself there. Gradually all the heavy shadows were melted, and the water grew light. It looked up to the star with its heart aglow, and was happy. Then the moon called for her handmaiden, and the star went away. At first the lake did not know what had happened; the water had drunk so much light it felt content. But day followed night, and night followed day, and never a ray of light came to gladden it. Then the lake grew blacker and deeper than ever before, and its despair was worse than if the star had never come, for it knew what light meant.'

There was a long silence when Sebald had finished. Celia understood him utterly, but a strange whirl of feeling within her made her unable to speak. At last she took his hand gently.

'The star never forgot the lake,' she said; 'she would shine always if she might, but you know there is only one night when it is possible.'

Sebald carried her hand to his lips.

'The lake can never forget,' he said; and then Afra and the others came back.

During the next few days Celia could hardly understand herself. She had made up her mind to go away as soon as possible, and she felt that she ought to avoid Sebald, for she could scarcely look at her blind friend without feeling the tears in her eyes, and the idea of leaving him gave her a dull ache in her heart. She refused to play to him any more, and took her aunt off on long expeditions, hoping to bridge over the last few days in a natural way.

It was necessary, however, that Sebald should know their stay was nearly over; and though each day she made up her mind to tell him, each night she found she had not been able to do so. But on the last day she forced herself to say in an indifferent tone, 'We are going away to-morrow morning, so I must say good-bye to you now.'

Sebald was dumb for a few moments.

'Are you going?' he stammered at length; 'going away?'

'Yes, we are going,' said Celia sadly; and then she put out her hand.

'No! no!' cried Sebald, 'not like this. You have kept away the last few days, and now you must let me be with you again. You must—you must! This evening?'

Celia did not know what to answer, but she left her hand in his.

'Do not be afraid,' he went on. 'I want to have a last time to remember, that is all. I will wait for you at the door about nine o'clock, and we will sit by the church for a little while.'

His voice was trembling.

'Yes, I will come,' Celia answered quietly. She could not refuse him this.

When it was evening, and she had disposed of Aunt Lucy, she ran down to the door and found him waiting for her. There is such a vast unknown abyss of feeling within us, that sometimes, when we draw close to the edge and look over, we turn dizzy and move away. Celia would not talk about last times and good-byes.

'Let us pretend,' she said, 'that it is going on like this for ever, and that to-morrow and to-morrow will be always the same.'

All the silence of the last few days was forgotten, and it seemed as if their intercourse had remained unbroken. They walked up the stone steps, and Celia settled herself in one of the archways. It was a magnificent night, and one of those warm mysterious hours fanned by a wind which belongs to the sunny day, but lit by the pale glamour of the moon. The lake and the mountains were on one side of her, and on the other stood Sebald. She almost forgot that he could see nothing, in her ecstasy over the scene before her.

They were silent for a few seconds, but suddenly he took one of her hands and held it between his.

'Child,' he said, 'this is the last time. Tell me what you see there. Make me see it too, so that I can always remember.'

'I will try,' Celia answered; 'and you must sit here with me.'

But Sebald knelt down beside her, still holding her hand, and told her to begin.

'First, then,' she said, 'we must begin with the sky, because it is over everything. It is deep, deep blue, lit by a few stars, and down there, just above the mountain behind your house, is the moon. She is glad to find no clouds anywhere to dim her radiance, and she is shedding a silver mist over everything. The great mountains have melted into gossamer; their substance has gone into their shadows, which are drowning in the lake. The

water is quite black and still under them, but wherever its mood is ruffled the light of the moon plays with it and makes it laugh. The stars are streaming down—oh!' she cried, breaking off, 'can you see it all as I do? I believe you can.'

Sebald lifted up his head. His eyes were closed, as they always were, but he had seen a vision.

'This is the last time,' he said again. 'Make me see your face. It is more beautiful to me than the lake, and I know there is light when I turn towards you.'

'No, no,' said Celia, 'I cannot do it. You live in a world far more beautiful than ours, and if I am in it you see me far more beautiful than I am. Think of me always like that.'

'Let me feel your face with my hand,' he said; 'I know what you are like, but I want never to forget.'

She took his hand and laid it on her head. He felt the soft curls which grew low over her forehead; he felt the cool whiteness of her brow; and then he passed his fingers over her little tilted nose and reached her mouth. He traced in its delicate passionate curves—the full red lips were half open. He could bear no more and he got up and turned away.

'Good-bye,' he said, holding out both his hands as he had done on that first day; 'good-bye. You must leave me here alone.'

Celia got down from her seat. She was stirred to the very depths of her nature. Her mind had obeyed his call as he touched her forehead, her heart had sent its love to him through her eyes when his hand had closed their lids, and her soul left her when he reached her lips.

'Sebald,' she cried, 'I am blind too. I can see nothing without you.'

His arms were still outstretched. She made an impulsive movement towards him, when, suddenly, the church clock above began to strike. For a second she hesitated—then she heard steps coming towards them. She drew back from him with a sound in her voice, half cry, half sob, and ran away into the house.

And this is the end of the story, for he never heard her voice again. And yet not the end, for if a stone be dropped into the water of life the ripples spread and spread, in ever widening circles, changing the whole surface, till even the distant shores are touched.

Spiders.

HOW is it that though ants and bees have had their patient, loving chroniclers, who have devoted years to the study of their habits and peculiarities, spiders have not secured an equal amount of attention from lovers of all that is most interesting in the animal world? I suppose that the instinctive dislike with which most people look upon the spider is responsible for this neglect. It certainly cannot be said that these creatures have not so many interesting characteristics as bees or ants have. None of the smaller members of creation excel them in this respect; indeed, I venture to say that spiders offer more attractive traits to the observer who can bring himself to ignore their ugliness, than any other inmates of our houses and gardens. I will endeavour to support this contention by giving some of the results of my observations of spiders, supplementing my own knowledge of the subject with information drawn from the writings of those naturalists who have bestowed more than the most cursory attention on these clever creatures.

To begin with, it may be stated that the spider is not an insect, though probably nine people out of ten would class it under this term. With scorpions and mites, spiders form a Class in the Animal Kingdom known as the *Arachnida*. This name is derived from a mythical personage called Arachne, the daughter of a purple-dyer of Lydia, who was fabled to have challenged Minerva to a trial of skill in spinning. So indignant was the goddess at this act of boldness, that she forthwith transformed the hapless challenger into a spider, presumably in order that she might have the best possible opportunity of practising the art on which she prided herself so much. Spiders differ from insects in five main particulars: their eyes are simple instead of compound, they have eight legs in place of six, they do not pass through the metamorphoses which are characteristic

of insects, they have no antennæ, and their breathing is accomplished by means of organs which combine the functions of lungs and gills, instead of by tubes pervading their bodies. These points of distinction are sufficient to determine the fact that it is impossible to class spiders as insects.

It is scarcely necessary to say that the most distinctive feature of spider life is the web which most of these creatures spin, and which enables them to ensnare insects that would otherwise easily evade them. Some spiders prepare no webs, but they spin cocoons, so it is incorrect to call them non-spinners, as is often done. To this class belong the hunting spiders, which pursue their prey as a cat does a mouse. In summer-time the zebra-striped hunting spider may be seen at work on almost any wall or tree. It is usually so intent upon its stalking operations that it may be observed quite closely without showing any signs of fear. If you should happen to catch sight of one of these active creatures while it is engaged in a search for some eatable insect, you will be surprised at the rapidity of its movements. It darts about, peering into crevices and exploring cracks in every direction. Now and then it will raise itself on its fore legs and take a good look round. As soon as it sights a fly or a gnat, its restlessness is changed for stalking as stealthy and cautious as that of the cheetah. It advances slowly, taking advantage of every little bit of cover, and pausing if its victim shows the least sign of uneasiness. These wily tactics continue until it is within leaping distance, when it darts upon the unsuspecting insect with inconceivable rapidity, and after a short struggle invariably disengages itself from its vanquished foe. To prevent the chance of a fall if, as is often the case, its spring is made on a perpendicular wall, this spider draws a fragile thread behind it, which acts as a support in case of a catastrophe. The accuracy with which these little creatures spring upon their prey is wonderful. They never seem to miss their stroke. Some of the spiders which spin no snares depend for food upon their choice of a suitable ambush, hiding in a crevice or beneath a fallen leaf until some insect passes sufficiently near to them; but the majority of this branch of the race trust rather to their powers of stalking than to the chance of some toothsome morsel straying by them as they lie in wait.

The webs of those spiders which spin snares out of doors, as the geometrical garden spider, are formed of two sorts of silk, one of which is used for the main cables and the radiating threads, the other for the concentric threads. The latter are thickly

studded with minute globules of a viscous substance, which retains the fly, gnat, or moth that may blunder against them ; while the former are quite dry and harmless. A third kind of silk is produced by the busy little spinner when some such large insect as a wasp has become entangled in the web, and threatens to break the delicate structure in its struggles. This takes the form of an enveloping mass, which is suddenly produced, and which effectually prevents any further gyrations on the part of the captured insect. The spinning-machine is situated under the hinder part of the spider's body. It takes the form of a slight depression, which a close inspection shows to consist of six small bodies resembling tubes. Four of these contain an immense number of minute openings—as many as a thousand can be counted in each—and from every one of these openings a viscous fluid issues, which hardens on exposure to the atmosphere. The whole four thousand threads are united into one line, which is sometimes so fine that four million twisted together would not have a combined diameter greater than that of an ordinary hair from the human head. It is impossible to conceive the excessive slenderness of one of the four thousand threads which compose such a line. The bare statement that each one has a thickness only one sixteen thousand millionth of that of a human hair does not in any way convey the impression of its wonderful fineness. The mind can no more grasp the meaning of such figures than it can understand the immense distances of which astronomers talk so glibly. Two miles of silk has been drawn from the body of a single spider, and yet it is calculated that twenty-seven large spiders would be required to produce a pound weight of the material.

When the common geometrical spider has made up its mind to spin a web, it commences operations by enclosing a certain area with the foundation lines. To these, radiating lines are fixed, generally about thirty in number, and all joining in the centre of the snare. When the radii are finished, the spinner proceeds to weave the concentric lines, stretching them from one radiating thread to another, and forming them of the silk thickly studded with viscous drops, to which I have already alluded. Starting from the centre of the web, however, the first few concentric threads are without this peculiarity, the reason being that the spider likes to sometimes sit in the middle of its web, and naturally does not care to be incommoded with the sticky matter which it prepares for the special benefit of its prey. When the snare is finished, a task which often does not occupy more than

forty minutes, in spite of the complicated nature of the work, the spider weaves a cell in some secluded spot close at hand, connecting it with the centre of the web by means of a special thread. This, by its trembling, gives intimation of the capture of any insect in the web, and also forms a pathway by which the snugly-ensconced spider is enabled to proceed on an investigating expedition. No small insect ever escapes from the web of a spider, a fact which is not to be wondered at when it is considered that an ordinary-sized snare may contain as many as a hundred and twenty thousand viscid globules. The spinner is constantly engaged in repairing injuries to the web inflicted by wind, stray leaves, or captured insects. Once a day the whole snare is submitted to rigorous examination, and any broken or loosened threads are adjusted.

The strength of spider silk is incredible. Size for size it is considerably tougher than a bar of steel. An ordinary spider's thread is capable of bearing a weight of three grains, while a steel thread of the same thickness would support less than two. A bar of steel one inch in diameter will bear a weight of fifty tons, but it is calculated that if a spider's thread of the same size could exist, it would be capable of supporting a weight of seventy-four tons: that is to say, its strength would be half as great again as that of steel, or nearly three times that of wrought iron.

The web of the house spider differs from that of the garden variety in two points: its mesh is much finer, and it is composed of one kind of silk only. The flies which find their way into it are detained by the entanglement of their claws in the fine meshes. The house spider, as a rule, makes its snare in the corner of the room; its first operation is to press its spinners against the wall, thus securing the threads in a particular spot; then it goes to the opposite side, and fastens the other end of the thread. This primary line is strengthened by two or three others being run along beside it, threads are drawn from it in various directions, and the interstices are filled by the spider's running backwards and forwards, always leaving a line behind it. In one corner of the completed web a tube is made, in which the spider conceals itself and waits for the appearance of unwary flies.

It is not surprising that so uncanny-looking a creature as the subject of this sketch should have various attributes of a more or less surprising nature awarded to it. In rural districts it is no very uncommon occurrence to find that there is a firm belief in the curative powers of spiders in cases of ague. Eleazar Albin says that he has been instrumental in curing several children of

this complaint ‘by hanging a large spider, confined in a box, about their necks, reaching to the pit of the stomach, without giving any internal remedies.’ This superstition is made use of by Longfellow, when he writes in ‘Evangeline’:

Only beware of the fever, my friends—beware of the fever;
For it is not, like that of our cold Acadian climate,
Cured by the wearing a spider hung round one’s neck in a nutshell.

Outward applications of the creature have not always been relied upon in cases of ague. Some little time ago there lived a lady in Ireland who was renowned for the success of her treatment of the disease. Her remedy was one which required a certain amount of courage to put into force, consisting, as it did, of swallowing a bolus composed of a spider enveloped in treacle. Not that spiders have never been eaten, for there are many cases on record of persons who have enjoyed them fully as much as any gourmand relishes a choice oyster; and really one is inclined to think that the man who first ate an oyster was fully as bold as those who have feasted on spiders. The enjoyment of particular kinds of food is, after all, a matter of custom; and the African who revels in white ants is no more peculiar in his tastes than the European who eats cheese-mites. A lady whom M. Réaumur knew was accustomed to devour spiders as fast as she could catch them, and a German lady gave it as her opinion that these creatures resembled in taste the most delicious nuts. A fellow-countryman of this lady was in the habit of regularly hunting spiders in his own and his friends’ houses: he used to spread them on bread, Rözel tells us, and vowed that they were far pleasanter to the palate than butter.

Everyone knows how unlucky it is supposed to be to kill one of the tiny ‘money-spiders.’ It is rather hard to say why these little creatures should have protection awarded to them in this way, unless it is because they are particularly numerous on a fine morning. In the sixteenth century it was generally stated that ‘spiders be true signs of great stores of gold,’ a saying which arose thus: While a passage to Cathay was being sought by the north-west, a mariner brought home a stone which was announced to be gold, and caused such a ferment that several vessels were fitted out for the express purpose of collecting the precious metal. Frobisher, in 1577, found on one of the islands where he landed, similar stones, and an enormous number of spiders. But to detail all the superstitions in connection with these creatures would

require an entire article. Even schoolboys are led to forgo their usual destructiveness when they are in question. I remember that when I was a lad at Winchester it was considered a most unlucky thing to do any injury to a particularly large kind of spider which is sometimes found in the college buildings, and which went among us boys (or men, as we called ourselves) by the name of a Wykehamist.

A question which has often been mooted, and has more than once been given a practical trial, is : 'Can spider-silk be turned to good account as a textile material ?' There is no doubt that this beautifully soft and fine silk is capable of being worked up into articles of clothing ; for a native of Languedoc established a factory for weaving it in the earlier days of the century, and succeeded in producing gloves and stockings which attracted a great deal of attention, while it is on record that Louis XIV. was presented with an entire suit of spider-silk. The one insuperable difficulty to a development of this industry appears to be that the extreme pugnacity of spiders entirely prevents their being kept together in such large numbers as any manufacture of their silk necessitates ; and of course to keep each one separately would involve far too great an amount of trouble and expense. It seems hopeless to expect that European spiders will ever live together without falling upon one another, and so the idea of turning their product to profitable account must be abandoned. If only this was not the case, no doubt a lucrative business could be done in rearing them for the purpose of making use of their silk. Rather before the days of the experiment in France, an Englishman named Rolt was awarded a medal by the Society of Arts for his success in obtaining appreciable quantities of silk from the garden variety. By connecting a reel with a small steam-engine, and thus obtaining a rapid rate of revolution, he was able to wind eighteen thousand feet of beautifully lustrous white silk from a couple of dozen spiders. The impetus which these experiments in this country and in France gave to the idea of utilising spider-silk was, however, damped by the disastrous experiences of a Frenchman who made up his mind to go in for the business on a large scale, and accordingly procured five thousand spiders, which he confined in fifty different boxes. He met with some difficulty in keeping his stock supplied with a sufficiency of insects, with the result that they fell upon one another, to such good purpose that one morning the experimenter found only a few hundred survivors. The stupendous nature of the task that a man

who essays to provide food for some thousands of these voracious little creatures sets himself, may be imagined when it is stated that a confined spider has been proved by actual experiment to eat twenty-six times its own weight in the course of a day! At this rate, a man of ordinary size would require three or four bullocks and from fifteen to twenty sheep to satisfy his appetite daily.

Though, however, it seems that our spiders cannot be made of use commercially, there is no reason why those of other lands should not supply material for the loom. Dr. Walsh recounts that in his travels through Brazil he came across a spider which he named *Aranea maculata*, and is admirably adapted for silk-producing purposes. Far from devouring one another, after the voracious manner of their European relatives, these spiders live in little communities apparently on the best of terms. They are of enormous size, and spin a yellowish web, the threads of which are fully as thick as ordinary silk. The size and strength of these webs are shown by the following statement made by Dr. Walsh: 'In passing through an opening between some trees I felt my head entangled in some obstruction, and on withdrawing it, my light straw hat remained behind. When I looked up, I saw it suspended in the air entangled in the meshes of an immense cobweb, which was drawn like a veil of thick gauze across the opening, and was expanded from branch to branch of the opposite trees as large as a sheet ten or twelve feet in diameter.' The doctor's account of the huge web spun by this spider has been confirmed by the observations of other travellers, one of whom states that he has seen a single web which completely enveloped a large lemon-tree. Spider-silk such as this is produced in other parts of the world besides Brazil. Speaking of the spiders in Ceylon, Sir J. E. Tennant says: 'Their webs, stretched from tree to tree, are so strong as to cause a painful check against the face when moving quickly against them, and more than once in riding I have had my hat lifted off by a single thread.' Presumably the spider of whose web Sir J. E. Tennant speaks in these terms is the same one as that described by Sir Samuel Baker in one of his writings about Ceylon. He says that it is two inches in length, and spins a web two or three feet in diameter, the threads of which are so strong that if a walking-stick is thrown among them it remains suspended. Mr. F. W. Burbidge tells of another spider, black, yellow-spotted, and measuring six or even eight inches across the extended legs, which spins silk of the thickness of ordinary sewing-cotton. Though nothing is said

about the sociability of this creature or of the spiders of Ceylon, it seems well within the bounds of possibility that at no very distant date spider-silk may become a recognised material in the textile market. Perhaps the enormous success which Mr. Lister made of alpaca may be emulated by someone who manages to acclimatise these silk-producing spiders.

Whilst I am on the subject of the useful purposes which spiders' webs may be made to serve, I may mention one very serviceable property possessed by them—this is, the way in which they foretell the weather. Of the many natural barometers none is more trustworthy than the web of a spider. Careful observations have shown that its condition is a most unfailing weather-guide. For instance, if a spider is seen to be shortening the filaments by which its web is suspended, there will be wind or rain, or both, before many hours have passed, and they will continue short as long as the weather remains variable. If, on the other hand, these threads are lengthened, fair, calm weather may be expected, the duration of which may be judged by the extent to which the threads are elongated. If a spider remain inactive, it is a sign of rain; but if it keeps on with its work during rain, the shower will soon be over, and will be followed by fine weather. I have already mentioned the fact that the spider overhauls its web once in the course of every twenty-four hours. If this is done in the evening, just before the sun sets, a clear, fine night may be confidently expected.

Spider-silk is turned to practical account by the makers of land-surveying instruments, who divide their glasses into sections by fastening threads of it across them. The extreme fineness of spider-silk makes it especially adapted for this purpose. The required silk is obtained in a very simple and ingenious manner. A piece of wire shaped like a hairpin, with a space between the two prongs rather greater than the diameter of the glass to which the silk is to be fitted, is provided. The spider which is to be made to yield its thread is tossed from one hand of the operator to the other until the instinct of self-preservation prompts it to emit a silken line with the intention of letting itself down to the ground by its aid. The end of this filament is promptly fastened to the wire, and the spider is allowed to drop. As soon as it finds itself suspended in the air, it spins away as fast as it is able, but the thread is wound upon the wire as it is produced until the supply is exhausted or the reel is filled. By this contrivance a quantity of threads of the requisite length is obtained.

There does not seem to be any very definite information as to the age which spiders attain. No doubt, however, they live for many years. Mr. Jesse tells of two spiders which spun their webs in opposite corners of a drawer, and continued to occupy them for thirteen years. The drawer was only used as a receptacle for soap and candles, and was never opened except to put in or take out some of these articles. Unless the spiders developed a taste for them, it is difficult to see how they managed to keep themselves alive in such quarters, for the insects which form their natural food can hardly have penetrated there in sufficient numbers to sustain them. They are said to have been invariably found in the same position, seldom showing more of themselves than the two fore legs which projected from the inner corners of their webs.

Though spiders are so quarrelsome among themselves, they would seem to be not indifferent to kindness, if we may take one striking example as typical of the whole race in this respect. In his 'Life of Pellisson,' the Abbé d'Olivet tells the following story: 'Confined at the time in a solitary place, where the light of day penetrated only through a small slit, having no other servant nor companion than a stupid and dull clown, a Basque, who was continually playing the bagpipes, Pellisson studied to secure himself against an enemy which a good conscience alone cannot always repel—I mean the attacks of unemployed imagination, which, when it once exceeds proper limits, becomes the most cruel torture of a recluse individual. He adopted the following stratagem: Perceiving a spider spinning her web at the aperture before mentioned, he undertook to tame her, and to effect this he placed some flies on the edge of the opening, while the Basque kept playing on his favourite bagpipe. The spider by degrees accustomed herself to distinguish the sound of that instrument, and to run from her hole and seize her prey: thus by always calling her out with the same tune, and placing the flies nearer and nearer to his own seat, after several months' exercise he succeeded in taming the creature so well that she would start at the first signal to seize a fly at the farthest end of the room, and even on the knees of the prisoner.'

The young of many kinds of spider, and adults of a few, have a habit of allowing themselves to be wafted into the air and transported, sometimes for great distances, attached to long, loose threads. It has been stated by many naturalists that there is a 'gossamer spider' which alone possesses the power of doing this,

but their idea is an erroneous one. This question has aroused a good deal of controversy from the different ideas that have been formed as to the extent to which the little creatures are able to direct their aerial flights. Mr. White made the following observations on the subject: ‘Every day in fine weather in autumn do I see spiders shooting out their webs and mounting aloft; they will go off from the finger if you take them in your hand. Last summer one alighted on my book as I was reading in the parlour, and running to the top of the page, and shooting out a web, took its departure from thence. But what I most wondered at was, that it went off with considerable velocity in a place where no air was stirring; and I am sure that I did not assist it with my breath. So that these little crawlers seem to have, while mounting, some locomotive power without the use of wings, and move faster than the air in the air itself.’ Mr. White’s ideas have not, however, been confirmed by those of others. I have myself made many observations of this movement of spiders through the air, and am positive that they have no powers of transporting themselves beyond the emission of the feathery threads which are acted upon by atmospheric currents. The gentlest breath of air is sufficient to waft along the insignificant weight of a small spider when attached to so inconceivably light a substance as ‘gossamer’ thread. There is no doubt that extensive migrations of spiders are carried out by this method of travelling. Incredibly distances are covered by spiders borne upon their aerial webs. The rigging of the *Beagle* was, for instance, once found to be covered with them when fully sixty miles separated the vessel from the nearest land.

Though most female spiders are very solicitous with regard to the safety of the cocoons in which they enwrap their eggs, this anxiety seems to be purely instinctive, and not dictated in any way by love of their offspring. A spider which is deprived of her ball of eggs will manifest the liveliest feelings of distress, hunting about in every direction for her lost treasure. But with all her solicitude regarding it she may be persuaded to accept something else in its stead with the greatest possible ease. Any substance which resembles the cocoon in size, shape, weight, and colour is seized upon by her with the utmost eagerness, and she hurries off perfectly well satisfied that her eggs are under her care once more. The wolf-spider is the most conspicuous example of maternal tenderness which the race affords. She watches over the hatching of her children with great care, and when the time comes

for them to make an appearance, helps them to extricate themselves from the envelope in which they are confined. Once they are safely hatched, she allows them to cling to her body in such numbers that they often completely hide their parent. For several months she exercises a close supervision over them, scarcely letting them out of her sight until they are old enough, in her judgment, to seek their own living.

Spiders kill their prey by the agency of a poisonous fluid, which is secreted in a gland, and which flows at will to the extremity of one of the fauces or jaws. Some writers have denied the existence of this poisonous substance; but the effects which a spider's bite have been known to have upon a human being prove undoubtedly that it is present. Persons who have been bitten by a very large South American spider, known as *Mygale fusca*, have felt the effects in the recurrence of severe pains in the portion of the body attacked for as long as twelve or even twenty years after the infliction of the wound. The stories told of the disastrous effects of the bites of the *Tarantula* are, however, quite fabulous. Everybody has heard of the belief, held by the inhabitants of the district round Tarantum, that if one chanced to be bitten by a *Tarantula*, he became subject to a dire disease which could only be cured by musical strains. The disease no doubt existed, and was probably a form of hysteria, in the cure of which music may have proved beneficial; but to saddle an innocent spider with the odium of producing it was distinctly unfair.

The destructive powers of spiders do not stop short at killing insects, for some tropical species habitually catch and eat small birds. The accounts first given of these formidable creatures were for a long time looked upon as mere travellers' tales, but more recent observations have fully confirmed the statements made by those who originally described them. The birds are not caught in snares, for these spiders spin no webs. They conceal themselves in crevices or under leaves, and from some such retreat pounce upon the birds they have succeeded in approaching. A great deal of their hunting is done during the dark hours of night, when they are able to steal upon their prey without being perceived. They often rifle the nests of humming-birds, dragging out the young and devouring them, while the distracted parent birds flutter helplessly around.

The clever workmanship of the 'trap-door' spider has been so often described that I will not devote any space to it, beyond

telling of the fate which often overtakes one of the species which makes its home in the ground. We are so accustomed to look upon the spider as a destroyer, that there is something novel in finding it in the *rôle* of a victim. On the South American pampas certain spiders make little holes in the ground, and in these they lie waiting for the approach of insects. In summer the haunts of these creatures are visited by the female of a wasp, rather smaller than the familiar wasp of our country. She makes a careful investigation of every hole she encounters, and when she discovers one which is tenanted by a spider, enters it. For a few moments the observer has no indication of the reception awarded to the intruder, but presently the wasp is to be seen hurrying away from the mouth of the hole, with the spider in eager pursuit. When they have gone a short distance, the pursued creature suddenly assumes the aggressive, and, turning upon her enemy, grapples with it. There is a short struggle, which invariably terminates in the complete collapse of the spider. It is not killed, but seems paralysed by the sting of its antagonist, and lies motionless, except for an occasional spasmodic movement of the legs. The wasp drags her vanquished enemy back to the recesses of the hole, once its home, and stowing it away there, lays an egg beside it, then carefully fills the hole with dust and rubbish, and departs to find another victim. When the egg is hatched, the larva, of course, feeds upon the body which its parent has so thoughtfully provided.

A curious point with regard to spiders is the disparity in the sizes of the sexes. The female is almost invariably considerably larger than the male; indeed, in one species she is thirteen hundred times as large as her partner. The male spider's courtship is apt to be a very gruesome one, for it is frequently terminated by his being killed and eaten by his more powerful mate.

ARTHUR SOMERSET.

Country Parsons.

Remote from towns he ran his godly race,
Nor e'er had changed, nor wished to change, his place.
GOLDSMITH.

WHATEVER else Disestablishment may do or leave undone, without doubt it would remove many clergymen from lonely and isolated parishes. These would, in that case, probably be served, as was the rule in Lincolnshire in times yet remembered, from different centres. Without touching upon the expediency of this policy, its adoption would in a short time drive into the towns many kindly, scholarlike parsons, and wipe out of existence several types of country clergy. These worthy, in not a few cases admirable, men, could ill be spared in districts where few or no rich squires—perhaps none of the social rank of gentlepeople—live; where the natives are abandoned to a sordid monotony of daily labour, and seldom influenced by the teaching or example of cultivated neighbours. Numerous unfashionable or thinly populated districts of this kind may be found in England, now among the un-picturesque flats of East Anglia, now on the hilly Marches of Wales and in the dales of Yorkshire and Westmoreland. Even in Devonshire, on and contiguous to the ‘Moor,’ a good many retired parishes exist, and in each of all these lonely posts at present an educated man keeps watch against bodily, mental, and spiritual barbarism. It can scarcely be matter of surprise that these good men occasionally develop into curiously independent characters. Their position is a freehold office. They cannot be removed so long as they do their duty; sometimes not readily, even if they fall into scandalous or immoral practices. Their education and modes of thought predispose them to run into certain moulds. They take in each his own newspaper, and seldom are the views which it expresses questioned, owing to inability or unwillingness to read other papers, and lack of opportunity to converse with men of other political or literary opinions. A clergyman’s absolute

predominance in the pulpit perhaps encourages him to hold outside it equally decided views on art and letters, politics and diocesan matters. These views or prejudices gradually cling as tightly to a country parson's powers of judging as do limpets to a rock. He is mastered by them, and because he espouses their cause and contends vigorously on their behalf, the little world outside deems him a visionary or an eccentric dreamer. He does not think or act as they do, and rustics dislike nothing so much as independent thought and action. Let the parson be a confirmed old bachelor or widower, and he is almost certain to become a marked man in some line or other. But rural distrust is not so strong as its affection, and when a clergyman has long lived blameless in one parish, its members generally cherish the kindness and trustworthiness of their pastor, and requite his care of them with answering good-will and cordiality. He may have buried the parish twice over, and emulated Old Scarlett at Peterborough, without possessing, it may be hoped, that worthy's

Scarebabe mighty voice with visage grim.

He has certainly baptized and taught all the younger men and women; not a family but has received kindnesses from him and found his value in times of trouble. It is not wonderful, then, that they have learned to love and respect one who has ever been an influence for good in their midst, who has ever set his face against mean and sordid views or deeds, who, to take the lowest view of his calling, has always witnessed for truth, and light, and goodness.

Wordsworth's essay on the respective advantages of curates and incumbents is well worth reading in this connection.¹ 'How agreeable to picture to one's self,' he says, 'as has been done by poets and romance writers, from Chaucer down to Goldsmith, a man devoted to his ministerial office, with not a wish or a thought ranging beyond the circuit of its cares!' And he declares that such characters are to be found, scattered, it may be hoped, not sparingly over real life, especially in sequestered and rural districts. Without adverting to the higher sides of the rural parson's life, it may be allowable to glance with a kindly eye at the little eccentricities and mannerisms which so frequently beset him. Hawker of Morwenstowe, the poet-clergyman, with his dozen cats, his staves, and the like, is the best type, in his earnest religiousness, of retired and well principled eccentricity. Another country

¹ *Poetical Works*, p. 417, vol. vi. (ed. 1857).

clergyman, it was alleged, in quite late years, would persist in preaching extemporaneously, and every sermon, whatever its subject, invariably ran into a scathing denunciation of the new Poor Law. It was found necessary to call in the law's aid and suspend him. A third used one of the church's bells as his own dinner bell. Yet another occupied himself for several years in trying to construct a calculating machine. Its framework was carefully put together in his laundry, but the machinery could never be made to multiply by the line of seven. For all we know, he may yet be struggling there with his impracticable conception. Others are noticeable from talking and preaching in broad Devonshire or Cumberland dialect. A valued friend must have been the very last country parson to wear a tall hat, and what a bad hat was his! Talking of dress, two old clergymen, vicar and curate, lived together, and came down to breakfast on Sundays wearing the usual black ties in which, during the week, they went about the parish. Just as the bell changed, to show that in five minutes more service would commence, the housekeeper brought a tray containing two white neckcloths, which were then solemnly put on by the greybeards for the Sunday's duty. In the last century, Gilbert White was the best example of the observant and scholarly country parson. Thomas Twining was a greater scholar, but dissipated his energies on literary and musical likings. In almost all these cases the eccentric men were endeared to their parishioners. Their very foibles spoke of fallible human nature. They emerged, even by their oddities, from the throng of monotonous existences around them, as a hilly country lies nearer to the hearts of its inhabitants and is more noticed by them than wide horizons and level fields.

How much does a country parson's idiosyncrasy emerge in his study! Its very aspect betrays its owner. Sometimes, let us whisper (but, of course, parsons have other rooms in which to read), its appearance hardly comports with its name. Like the etymology of *lucus*, it is called a study because no one seems to study in it. It contains more guns and fishing-rods and boots than books. Some studies, however, can never be forgotten. They reflect the personality of their owners—Kingsley's, for instance, as described by Mr. Martineau. 'Its lattice window (in later years altered to a bay), its great heavy door, studded with large projecting nails, opening upon the garden; its brick floor covered with matting; its shelves and heavy old folios, with a fishing-rod or landing-net or insect-net leaning against them; on the table books, writing

materials, sermons, manuscripts, proofs, letters, reels, feathers, fishing-flies, clay pipes, tobacco. On the mat, perhaps, the brown eyes set in thick yellow hair, and gently agitated tail asking indulgence for the intrusion, a long-bodied, short-legged Dandie Dinmont Scotch terrier, wisest, handsomest, most faithful, most memorable of its race.' A study need not be large; indeed, a small one is often more conducive to thought. Witness Law's at King's Cliffe or Wesley's at Epworth. Standing in this it is impossible to avoid thinking of the historic ghost which came trundling down the stairs outside, and to feel wiser because a good man there worked and prayed. Who can forget the late Bishop of St. David's study? Every table, chair and shelf, loaded, running over and groaning with books; piles of them on the sofas and everywhere on the carpet; even an old portmanteau filled with them surmounting other books—a type of the great scholar's mind filled with many books, yet always able to find what it needed. But there are studies of other fashions. Here is one laboriously papered with spent postage-stamps; here is another which its owner has fitted up as an aviary and filled with canaries. This man keeps several families of white owls in his; that one has cumbered it with a big aquarium lined with sea-anemones. And yet each of these is studious in other ways, 'counting it not profaneness to be polished with humane reading or to smooth his way by Aristotle to school divinity.' The ornithologist may be seen bending over drawers filled with rare skins, the geologist's books rise stratum upon stratum from his desk. All these parsons agree more or less in antipathy to the housemaid's broom. Some always lock the study door on leaving it. What seems chaos, they say, to others, is a kosmos to themselves. In spite of which sentiment every now and then their wives, like 'ministering angels,' find their way in and proceed to 'tidy' the room. Perhaps this is in some cases absolutely necessary. Many country parsons never destroy a letter or even a newspaper. They may want them some day, they think, and the study and its approaches are filled with heaps, mounds, piles, stacks of papers, which the servants are dared so much as to dust.

A parson's horse is often as much of a character as its master. It is petted and humoured, allowed to walk round the outbuildings and curtilage like a great dog, and knows how to unfasten every gate on the glebe. Not unseldom the parson awakes from the sound sleep of Monday morning to find it standing on his lawn and contemplating his bed of pinks. This one has a curious

facility when its master rides it in the winter of always falling in with the hounds. It is not every man who is bold enough, like a late well-known North Devon rector, to keep hunters. That one jibs and plunges, and will never start from the door until the factotum grasps its left ear, when it trots off like a lamb. A third is supposed to have been once upon a time a circus horse, and goes through divers antics and gambols as it approaches the parson's front door, concluding (say the villagers) with falling on its knees for its master to mount. Yet a fourth was deliberately chosen by the parson for its slow paces, that he might have time when ambling round his North Yorkshire parish to see the beautiful views. Country parsons' hobbies are as varied as their horses. They are archaeologists, tennis players, rose growers, butterfly catchers, fungus hunters, and, of course, trout fishers. Commonly they form the authorities of the diocese on these subjects, from an old-fashioned belief which they cherish of doing in the best manner whatever the hand findeth to do. That their dogs and cats are favoured pensioners and oddities in their way goes for granted. Where are such sagacious Scotch terriers to be found as in country rectories? Whose cat is so sleek as the parson's Timothy Tittlebat, which dozes on a pile of books by the study fire? It generally goes once too often, however to the Squire's woods, but of course the keeper knows nothing of it, and looks particularly distressed when reminded of the ill-fate which presumably overtakes it there.

For the rest, the country parson is somewhat too credulous for everyday life in the nineteenth century. The numerous companies which spring up daily like autumnal mushrooms forget not to send him alluring prospectuses. The chances are that before he married he once took shares in a company to light Mashonaland with electricity, or manufacture diamonds out of peach stones (Limited). The results were not encouraging, and have at all events saved him from further speculation. The clergy as a rule are temperate drinkers, and yet wine merchants are slow to believe it. Every country parson has at least a hundredweight of prospectuses of wines sent him yearly. Considering, too, how tithes have fallen, it is a cruel aggravation of his lot that the bulk of these come just before Christmas. 'The widow of a late eminent divine' is just at that time selling her port at a fabulous reduction, or 'a curious parcel of ditto ditto, green seal,' has been secured from the cellar of a lately deceased Queen's Counsel, and will positively be almost given away if the

country parson applies within a fortnight. It is singular how these confidential wine merchants forget that there is such a place as Oxford, and that it is just possible the clergy who have been there may know something about the mysteries of port wine. In his walks from farm to farm the country parson becomes acquainted with all their sheep dogs. Nero, Scot, and Towser draw near confidently, and he treats them as parishioners should be treated, patting their backs and pulling their ears. The cows he is not so fond of, for on one occasion when visiting a sick man at night he took the field path, stumbled over a sleeping cow, which rose suddenly and threw him over her back. He has to make wills, write letters, administer the teetotal pledge to erring wives, scold termagants (when the husband cannot manage them), and perform many another friendly office little suspected by worldly critics. It is even upon record that a country parson, on being pressed by a north countrywoman to repeat a charm over her cow, which was dying of some mortal complaint, in order to humour her stepped up to the animal in the 'byre,' and said, with a twinkle in his eye—

Gin thou mun live thou mun live,
And gin thou mun dee thou mun dee.

The animal happened soon after to take a turn and then quickly recovered. Some months afterwards the old clergyman was himself brought to death's door by a quinsy, and the woman begged to be allowed to go upstairs and bid him farewell. This was granted, and she stepped up to his pillow, and said solemnly—

Gin thou mun live thou mun live,
And gin thou mun dee thou mun dee.

This quite upset the parson's gravity, who laughed so much that something gave way in his neck, and he too recovered, still further convincing the woman of the efficacy of the charm.

As for sermons, they may be passed over in this depicting the lighter shades of a country parson's life. In an age of increased earnestness and devotion to duty the old story of the sermons kept in the oyster barrel may well be compared with the legendary consecration of Archbishop Parker at the 'Nag's Head.' Country parsons' wives form a still more delicate subject. It were wiser to be silent, and merely apply Pope's division to them, as 'best distinguished by black, brown, or fair.' Rectory gardens, however, possess a character of their own. They generally contain finer trees than flowers. The time-honoured yews, the lime-tree

walks, the big cedars, the horse-chestnuts whose branches droop to the lawn and are propped up to form an arbour, the elms which the Squire himself envies—who does not at once recall many such trees? There are of course beds filled every year with scarlet geraniums and blue and yellow hothouse plants, but the floral beauty of the rectory garden mainly depends upon its perennials, the old-fashioned monthly roses, bergamots, monk's-hood, larkspurs, and the like, to say nothing of its fuchsias and hoilyhocks, which in autumn cause it to resemble a picture by Van Huysum. Many a story of humble joys and sorrows has been told under the laurels by the forefathers of the hamlet, and many a boy and girl's first love-tale whispered by the big yew. Like the house, the garden is full of tender memories sacred to the history of several generations in no ways akin to each other. The bowling-green has long given way to a croquet-ground, and that suffered the usual transformation which tennis has everywhere brought with it. Thirty years ago a curate lived in the house, and it is upon record that the pluralist rector sent word he was coming to do duty after twenty years of absence. He came, but had forgotten his sermon. He was equal to the occasion, however, and instead of it solemnly read to the gaping rustics the Communion Service.

Under the terrace walk a wicket generally opens to the church-yard. The parson passes by half a dozen graves of his predecessors under the tower every time he enters its sacred precincts. Their lichen-covered stones preach him a sermon before he passes into the church to deliver his own message to the flock. None of their kith or kin sleep by these old rectors, and he knows that when the time comes for him to be laid near them, in all probability the widely diverging paths of modern life will admit of none of his own sons or daughters, perhaps not even his widow, lying beside him. And then he calls to mind how good Archbishop Leighton thought little of such pious feelings, natural though they are. He often said that if he were to choose a place to die in, remarks his biographer, it should be an inn. In such a place he thought a Christian believer might well finish his pilgrimage; the whole world being to him but a large and noisy inn, and he a wayfarer tarrying in it as short a time as possible. And, he adds, this singular wish was gratified, for the good man breathed his last in the Bell Inn, Warwick Lane. The country parson cannot understand the dislike which certain of the laity manifest to living near a churchyard. The green hillocks and grey stones of the

last thirty years each speak to him of an absent friend ; and if he has never wished any of them ill, he need not greatly fear their ghosts.

It is needless, not to say presumptuous, to touch on the graver aspects of a country parson's life after George Herbert's exquisite delineation of his character. The evening of his working day comes at last, and he commonly finds only then the warm sympathy and the kindly regard in which his parishioners hold him. Englishmen are not demonstrative, but affection will break out at times, and a parson's death frequently arouses feelings in the heart of a parish which are an honour to human nature. The parson's life, quaintly writes Bishop Earle, is the best apology for our religion ; 'his death is his last Sermon, where in the Pulpit of his Bed he instructs men to dye by his example.'¹

Still more sad, perhaps, to his friends is the last incident in a country parson's lot—his sale. A fussy auctioneer and an indifferent handful of pawnbrokers from the nearest town joke and chaffer over his books and pictures. The few choice Elzevirs which were the apple of his eye are knocked down at sixpence each ; his beloved classics are sacrificed in a heap for half a crown. The charwoman's son carries off the favourite fishing-rod for a toy. His *lares* and *penates* are thrust into corners, flung into carts, crammed into sacks and hastily driven off to catch the evening train. In worldly things the good man's epitaph was long ago written by the wise king, *Vanitas vanitatum, omnia vanitas*. In his high and holy aspect it may be hoped that the effects of his life and example upon his parishioners will be seen when the secrets of all hearts are disclosed.

M. G. WATKINS.

¹ *Micro-cosmographic*. 1628 (ed. Arber, p. 25).

The Mischief of Monica.

BY L. B. WALFORD.

CHAPTER IV.

IT WAS ABOMINABLE OF MONICA.

'Nor give thy humours way;
God gave them to you under lock and key.'—HERBERT.

MRS. GEORGE SCHOFIELD it was, whose horses, all in a steam 'twixt rain and heat, now stood before the entrance door.

Mrs. Schofield had been in a vast hurry to call upon her cousin Joseph's young relations, as she usually was to call upon any new comer to the neighbourhood, to the annoyance of her children, and the amusement of everyone else. 'If mama would only let people alone for ever so short a time,' one or another at the Grange would murmur, 'it would be such a comfort. We know quite enough people, as it is. Why, in all the world, should we fly to knock at every house directly it becomes inhabited? Every year more and more houses are being built; and to every one of these mama must start off, post haste, before the people have so much as had time to turn round! It makes such a host to invite whenever we give anything. But it is of no use talking to mama. Had mama been in the Ark, she would have been miserable until she had made acquaintance with the wives of Shem, Ham, and Japhet, and found their cards in her berth—or whatever did duty for a hall table.'

It must not be inferred from this, however, that the young Schofields were unsociable; the truth being that they were only rather more independent, and rather more pre-occupied than was their mother.

They were very busy young people. They were full of resources ; great in hobbies. There was not a taste nor a pursuit in vogue at the time, but one or other of them would infallibly become to it a convert. Several had collections : collections of eggs ; collections of moths and butterflies ; collections of coins ; collections of stamps. Some had joined societies : different societies for improvement and cultivation. George had a carpenter's shop and joiner's bench ; Robert cultivated his garden ; and the younger boys had pets of every description.

The girls on their part were scarcely less industrious and successful. It was their fond parent's boast that no one of them ever knew an idle moment. Not being herself a clever woman, and having a great deal of the same kind of energy without the vent of youthful emulation, and the benefit of early teaching, Mrs. Schofield's own ardour took the form, as has been before hinted, of a continual and unwearied persistence in cultivating neighbourly intercourse, with what result we already know.

But who was there to drop a hint of this, outside the domestic circle ? Within it, mama would be told pretty freely the mind of any son or daughter she came across ; each and every admonition only, as the phrase is, rolling like water off a duck's back. But in the world without, who was there foolish enough, or unkind enough, to be uncivil ? The Grange was a good house to go to ; Mrs. Schofield's roomy waggonette a good perch to fall back upon after a croquet party, or a garden party ; her night quarters snug ones when a ball was the *raison d'être* ; her dinners, dances, and suppers, excellent in themselves. To quarrel with such a hostess would have argued little short of idiocy ; more particularly when there was so simple a mode of adjusting the position, namely that before mentioned,—it was easy to get out of her way. Unless, therefore, her presence were particularly necessary, unless—it is a shame to say it, but it was so—unless there were the prospect of her being of *use* of any sort, the amiable matron's company was not sought after.

Thus, on the present occasion, she had inquired which of the girls would drive over with her to call on their newly arrived cousins, with her usual hopeful expectation of acquiescence—an expectation that past experience had never been able either to damp or diminish.

'Oh, mama, are you really going over to call at Flodden Hall to-day ? Why should you go to-day ?' had been the first rejoinder, being Miss Daisy Schofield's little spoke in the wheel.

'Well, my dear, it is the right thing to do ; and my cousin

Joseph will expect it ; and the young ladies will expect it themselves.'

' Oh, mama ' (Daisy generally began with ' Oh, mama ') , ' they won't. They would never think about it.'

' Of course they would think about it, Daisy, and very well they might. I ought to be the first to call, being very nearly if not quite a relation ; and besides I told cousin Joseph I should go.'

' Oh, mama, why did you do that ? '

' Why ? Because I am going, my dear ; and I thought that some of you would have liked to go too. The Lavenham girls are your own age, yours and Minnie's, and will be nice friends for you.'

But she had not been able to make any of them see it in that light. Daisy had put out her lips at the idea. She did not want friends ; she had her own friends, and as many friends as she cared for. How could she possibly lose a whole afternoon sitting stuffing in mama's hot landau, when she had such a lot of things to do ? She had a new part of her sonata to practise ; her drawing for the drawing society to finish ; her half-hour's reading for the reading society to get through ; besides which there were flowers to be brought in for the drawing-room ; and Mrs. Minx had promised to send down to the Grange her book of patterns, and the book of patterns was to be returned as soon as ever Daisy had chosen which she would have for a new summer skirt.

Minnie, who had been next applied to, had been peevish at the bare suggestion. It was too bad ; it was just the way she was always treated. Why should she have to go, just because Daisy did not choose to go ? Why should she always be the one to be set upon, whenever mama wanted somebody ? She had been out with mama twice since either Daisy or the rest had been once ; and she had a headache, a horrible headache, &c., &c., &c.

Lottie and Tottie, whose holidays had begun, and who were therefore at home also, had been equally frank in their resolutions. Lottie had made up her mind to go and see her own particular friend Mary Bond that afternoon ; she had not seen Mary Bond for ages—not since last Friday ; and Mary would wonder what had come over her ; and she had fixed to go ; while Tottie, calmly affirming that she hated driving, took up work-box and wools, and marched off, alleging that she intended to begin her new crewel chair-back under the trees, on the croquet ground.

' It really seems as if I could never get any one of you to like

to come,' the poor mother had at length averred (by her accents she might have made the discovery for the first time); 'one would have thought a nice drive on a fine afternoon—and the afternoon will be beautiful now that the storm is over—one would have thought it would have done you all good; and we might have gone over a nice large party—'

'Oh, a nice large party!' The groan had been Daisy's, but the sentiment had been written on her sisters' faces as well as on her own. 'When will you learn, mama, that of all things we detest going about in "nice large parties"? I am sure you have heard us say a hundred times that we do; and yet you *will* ask us,—'

'Well, my dear, well,' placidly; 'but I thought you would have liked to call on your cousins. To see some new faces,—'

'And new faces are just what we don't care to see.'

'Goodness gracious, Daisy! to hear a girl like you say that! Well, I must go by myself, then.'

'Of course if you *want* me, mama,' reluctantly.

'Oh, never mind, my dear.'

'But I do think Minnie might go,' with renewed energy. 'She has nothing to do; and supposing she has a headache, the drive would do her good.'

'Nothing to do!' protested the injured Minnie; 'I have a great deal to do. I have some letters to write, and I promised to take the *Queen* to Mrs. Carter—you know I did. So there! How can you say I have nothing to do?'

Poor Mrs. Schofield had at length been fain to declare that she was quite willing and happy to take her drive, and make her call, by herself; nay, she had almost gone the length of protesting that the girls were in the right, and that it would have been waste of their precious time to have gone with her.

To be sure, she had felt a little lonely when surveying the empty space in the large, broad landau; and a little melancholy when compelled perforce to hold her tongue from sheer want of a listener; but once arrived at cousin Joseph's front door, she was herself again. She was now all fidgety expectation and excitement; burning to inspect the new comers; to see how they would look beside her Daisy: to talk about Daisy, and about George, and the boys, and Minnie, and Lottie, and Tottie. Perhaps in her secret soul she did not regret the absence of any other member of her family, once the long, lonesome drive was over; once Flodden Hall was safely reached, and the young ladies

found at home, and chat begun. She had now no fear of being brought to book, corrected, and contradicted. In consequence, she was, if we may so speak, at her best ; and it may safely be affirmed that neither Monica nor Isabel Lavenham had ever in their lives entertained a visitor of the kind.

They possessed a large London acquaintance ; they knew a fair number of people in the country, people to whose seats they would go for hunt balls and shooting parties, and who would occasionally turn up at the smart watering-places to which Colonel and Mrs. Lavenham had always more or less resorted before their grand determination had been arrived at ; but neither town nor country mice had been in the slightest degree like Mrs. George Schofield. The fond, foolish, effusive, long-winded, maternal drone is rarely found in society. Mothers, they had known, it is true ; mothers who, as Monica declared afterwards, had been ‘bad enough,’ whose one topic and one source of interest had been some idolised darling at Eton or at Oxford—(it is usually in the male sex that the idolised darlings are found, as we all know)—but there was a breadth, a hopelessness, a comprehensiveness in the affections of the ample lady who was now seated, full spread, on cousin Joseph’s sofa, which it was well nigh impossible to meet and overcome. In the present instance, even the usual faint resistance was not offered. The Miss Lavenhams sat stupefied, and the waves rolled over their heads.

First of all, Mrs. Schofield was anxious to know when her young cousins would come over to the Grange, and make the acquaintance of the Grange and of all its inmates for themselves ? The Grange was only a few miles off ; within a nice, easy drive ; most of the way led through pretty lanes ; and the young people were longing to know them, and to know what they were fond of, what they would ‘take up,’ and what they would ‘go in’ for. All her young people ‘went in’ for something or other. Her girls were always busy ; and so for that matter were her boys. Although, to be sure, some of them had not so much time for their own affairs as the others ; George, for instance. George had come home for good, and was a junior partner in the business, his father’s business, and doing well, and went in to the office every day regularly.

He went in by an earlier train than cousin Joseph did, because of course everyone could understand that it would never do for the young men to go in by the old men’s trains—the young men’s train in the morning was full three-quarters of an hour before

the old men's train ; and George came out later than his cousin did, too ; he only came out in time for dinner ; and they had only a sort of tea-dinner all the summer, because the young people liked to stop out so late, and, do what she would, she found there was no getting them in.

So that she really did not see so much of George as she might. Although, to be sure, he had his Saturday afternoons and Sundays, and she was not so strict about Sunday as some people were, and thought there was no harm in her young people taking a walk with other young people on Sunday afternoons, and bringing their friends in to tea after it. George had many nice young men among his friends, and their Sunday teas were always very merry ; and no trouble to anyone, since the cloth could always be laid ready, with extra plates and cups, before the servants went out, in order that everybody might come in who chose.

She did think it was hard if such nice young men as George's friends might not have their tea, if they had walked out to see them on a Sunday,—but she knew some people who thought otherwise, and never liked the sound of her Sunday teas. Although, to be sure, she always took care that all the party went off to church in the evening afterwards ; their church was only a mile off, a nice walk over the fields, and the young men never seemed to think it a hardship ; and as for her own young people, she had never known any one of them so much as wish to stop away.

For one single half-minute the speaker paused to take breath.

'Pray go on,' said Monica Lavenham, with profound earnestness ; and even Isabel, who knew Monica, wondered what she would now be at.

Go on ? Oh, the dear creature ! A nice, pleasant face, and so attentive. Oh, Mrs. Schofield would go on (delightedly) with all the pleasure in life, my dear. What did they want to know about next ? Not but that they would do a great deal better to come over and see for themselves ; for, to be sure, she was a bad hand at description, and the girls were longing to see them, only they were so busy. But would Miss Isabel and Miss Monica come over to luncheon ? They might depend on her and the girls at luncheon, although, to be sure, George would not be present.

'Except on Saturdays and Sundays,' interposed Monica, sweetly.

'To be sure, yes. But then on Saturdays I am afraid, I am

in a sort of way afraid, that George is engaged for next Saturday ; I am nearly sure I heard him say so, and——'

'Then on Sunday ?' suggested the accommodating Miss Lavenham.

'On Sunday you would hardly get over in time after church, I am afraid. It is a longish walk, and cousin Joseph, you see, is particular about not taking out his horses on Sunday. Cousin Joseph has his own ideas about horses.'

'Of course, but we should not want horses. We might walk over to the Sunday afternoon tea,' proceeded Monica, on whom her sister's eyes were now bent in a sort of mute amazement. 'We might come in to the merry tea after the walk, might we not, Mrs. Schofield ? We are not so strict as some people are about Sunday either ; and we do walk on that day, I assure you. We walk in the park, when it is not too full of people. It would not do to go when it is very full of people, would it ? But there are quiet places, nice Sunday places——'

'Yes, yes,' cried Mrs. Schofield, beaming all over.

'Where one can take a book and read.'

'To be sure, yes.'

'And just look up now and then, if a prince or a princess is passing.'

'Lor', now !' a little doubtfully.

'You would not have us *not* look up if a prince or princess were passing, would you, Mrs. Schofield ?'

'Oh, dear me, no ; but——'

'But of course we look down at our books again, in a great hurry, directly they are gone—especially if they have not taken any notice of us. And now and then there are other curious people going by also. And the young men walk about. But then they are very nice young men, quite like George's young men.'

A shade of suspicion on her visitor's face.

'So I am sure you would not wish us to be hard on them. If we walk over to your Sunday tea, I do hope there will be some nice young men——'

'Oh, you may depend upon *that*,' and Mrs. Schofield rose, a little flurried and puzzled.

'But would you expect us to go to church with them afterwards ? Because if so, how are we to get back here ? I am afraid, after all, we shan't be able to come this Sunday ; but we must arrange for it some other Sunday, and meantime we will drive

over, and put up with finding only you and the girls at home. As they are too busy to come and see us, we will go and see them ; and, perhaps, if George can spare a Saturday away from the parties—

It was abominable of Monica. What moved the girl to behave in a manner so cruel, to ridicule a harmless woman who was such poor game, and so easily brought down, it is hard to say. Possibly she was out of sorts from the effects of the thunderstorm, from the disappointment respecting the day's expedition, from a general dissatisfaction with everything and everybody ; for it was really rather an unusual thing for her to be barefacedly rude ; it was only when people were aggressively ill-bred and arrogant themselves that this sprightly young lady was apt to let loose her tongue in return.

She had not given vent to a single scornful remark before her uncle ; she had made the best of the situation, even when the situation had fully developed itself, with her sister ; and she had written a cheerful, uncomplaining letter to her relations in London. It was strange that what was after all only the babble of a poor inoffensive creature, who knew no better, should have had power to vex her haughty spirit,—but so it was.

'I was wild—wild,' she burst out afterwards. 'I tell you, Bell, I could have struck that poor unconscious woman. Yes, I could. Don't stare at me. It was not *her*, can't you see ? It was the whole thing ; but it was she who brought it home to me ; she who made me rebel against it afresh, just as I had got the better of myself, and had—had almost become reconciled. Don't you see how she did it ? As she meandered on and on, I seemed to hear a voice within whispering : "This is what you have come to. This is the life you have before you. This is a specimen of the people you have come among." And then another idea rose to confront me, seeming to laugh at my misery ; to laugh at me, to mock me, to mock us both. Shall we two become like these Daisys and Minnies, and "go in" for them and their ways, and their societies and their Sunday teas, and their nice young men ? At Rome one must do as Rome does, you know. And these are our relations, Bell ; these are our own mother's own blood-relations—the young ones are at least. We cannot put them aside, refuse their invitations, and deny ourselves to them. We *must* meet, and we must behave properly ; we must go to their dreadful "parties" and play croquet, and—oh, when it all stared me in the face, and

when I thought, I thought of what we have left—of what we have lost—of the dear old life which seems now so far, far away—of the people whom we have known, whom we may never know again, and who will soon cease to think about us—of how we shall be forgotten, lost sight of, dropped—of how we have already been given up, and abandoned, while yet everything is going on just as it always does—’ Her voice faltered. ‘The Park will be full this afternoon, and it is the day of Harry Blenheim’s polo match at Hurlingham—did you remember?—and of Lady Beauly’s tea, and—and *we are here!* And what is worse, far worse, it will be always so, Bell. Next year, when the merry month of May begins, we shall know all that is beginning too ; the houses being re-opened, the window-boxes getting filled, the new carriages being bought, the dressmakers working against time, the invitations flocking in, and—and *we here!* No one will give us a thought’—she broke off short.

‘But uncle Lavenham thought that very likely uncle Schofield might take a house in town.’

‘Uncle Lavenham thought so?’ Monica’s voice rang with impatient scorn. ‘What did uncle Lavenham know? I tell you, child, that uncle Lavenham neither knew nor cared what became of us, once we were safely delivered out of his hands. He wanted to make the parting easy for everybody; and so he thought of all the sugar-plums he could heap together, and filled our mouths with them. We believed him; even I believed him, till I came, and saw. Last night I saw much; this morning I saw still more. Bell, we were a bale of goods for which uncle Lavenham had no further accommodation, wherfore we were shunted here. And here uncle Schofield intends us to remain. Do you see? *He* is no more likely to take us to town next year than to take us to the ends of the earth. We have only been in his house four and twenty hours, but that is enough to show me as much. He will be as kind as possible; he will give us everything we want; we shall have liberty to come and go as we please: our own money is supposed to be enough to pay all odds and ends of small expenses, and he will supply the great things of life—’

‘Then why cannot we go sometimes to town by ourselves?’

‘I do not say we may not go, sometimes, if we are asked. But we certainly could not go otherwise.’

‘Well; people will ask us,’ said Bell, confidently.

‘Will they?’ Monica’s lip curled. ‘I have been thinking it

over, and I do not know one who will—no, not one. Did you notice how “a few days” was the limit of the hospitality proffered even at this present time, even when we were before their very eyes, large as life? By next year our very memories will have faded. No one will care to have us, Bell.’ Slowly: ‘We have not made any real friends, we have only known a number of pleasant people. And we should not be the very best of visitors, neither. We should give a great deal of trouble. We should not be content unless we had as much done for us as poor aunt Fanny did. We should be miserable if we did not go to all the best things. We should be tiresome about keeping hours. We should want the use of carriages. I am afraid we should only do for stopping in great houses; and even in great houses everybody cannot have carriages and horses and meals exactly when they want them.’

‘I suppose you are right, Monica; but still I can’t help hoping, you know. Uncle Schofield may——’

‘He *may* do anything, he *may* be anything. I would not damp your expectations, poor dear, only I think you must be careful not to give them utterance. Bell, we must not show we are thinking of anything of the kind.’ With emphasis: ‘remember that, Bell. You will, will you not? I am quite sure, certain, that it would not only be very unkind, but dreadfully imprudent not to seem satisfied, grateful, and happy. It won’t be easy, but no doubt it will be good for us’: bitterly. ‘We have come down in the world, sister; we are no longer what we were. We shall no longer be able to know whom we will, to associate with whom we will. It is just a little hard upon us, young as we are, to be brought up so soon and so suddenly, when life was all before us; we did not expect it, we—we,’ and here, to the infinite discomfiture of her less volatile auditor, the speaker’s breath came and went, her voice broke, and looking at her, Isabel could see that her large, violet eyes were full and brimming with tears,

CHAPTER V.

BELL'S HIGH MISDEMEANOUR.

Give not thy tongue too great liberty, lest it take thee a prisoner.—*QUARLES.*

IN the course of a very short time, everybody who had sufficient propinquity, or position, or presumption, to venture upon calling on the Miss Lavenhams had done so—or, according to their uncle, the whole neighbourhood had done its part. He was radiant; his nieces were not. They had their own views upon the subject, views which the following conversation will serve to explain.

‘Another disappointment,’ exclaimed Isabel, throwing down some cards, which she had eagerly taken up a moment before; ‘I made sure it was the Dorriens at last. I saw the carriage from my seat on the bank, and it was a better sort of carriage than the usual ones; so that I said to myself, “Dorriens, Dorriens, you have come at last!”’ And I hurried down as soon as ever the carriage had departed. And now!’ and she eyed the luckless cards in fresh disgust, and turned disconsolately away.

Monica said nothing. Her countenance also wore an air of vexation, one had almost said of anxiety.

‘I wonder if they will ever come,’ continued Bell, fretfully. ‘We have been here a whole month, and surely they might have found us out before this. Monica,’ as with a sudden thought, ‘can it be that they don’t wish to find us? Can it be,’ apprehensiveness stealing into her tone, ‘that the only people from whom we had any hope, the only people who knew anything about us before we came to this dreadful place, and the only people on whom we had placed any kind of dependence, are going to fail us now? That they are not going even to know us?’

‘It looks a little like it, Bell.’

‘Of course they would have a long way to come. Cullingdon is ten miles from here; eight or ten, uncle Schofield said; he was not quite sure which. Oh, I did not say any more to him, I assure you,—I recollect that we were not to force the Schofield family on the notice of the Dorriens, and all that uncle Lavenham said about it,—but I thought it could do no harm merely to inquire the distance between us and them, and he told me that at the outside it could not be more than ten miles. Ten miles is not very far over country roads, is it?’

'Not *too* far, at all events.'

'And though aunt Fanny said Lady Dorrien was old, old people can always drive; look at old Mrs. Hesketh and Lady Charlotte Boydell, they drive all day long.'

'And Lady Dorrien is not their age, I should fancy. Aunt Fanny did not speak of her as very old.'

'It seems so odd when the son actually knows the Schofields too.'

'Yes, it is odd.'

'What are you thinking of? You have something in your thoughts when you answer like that. You are puzzling it out, as you often do, you wise creature; and then you will give poor stupid me the benefit of your puzzlements. Now for the benefit,' slipping her arm round the other's slim waist, as the two strolled into the drawing-room, where they were now quite at home, and which had been vastly improved by the circumstance. 'What has become of the Dorriens, Monica *mia*?' continued Isabel playfully. 'Read me the riddle of the Dorriens, learned sage.'

But Monica was not smiling. 'I am thinking,' she began slowly.

'And what are you thinking?'

'I am thinking—can it be *because* the son knows the Schofields—do you understand me?'

'Why, he cannot suppose that we—that you and I—he knows that we are not Schofields. You cannot mean *that*?'

'*That* is just what I do mean.'

'But, Monica dear, he knows us—'

'Knows us? no. He—'

'Knows who we are, and what we are.'

'Pshaw! Who is going to think of that? We have never met him; we have never even met the old people. Sir Arthur saw uncle Lavenham at the club, and uncle Lavenham came home declaring that Lady Dorrien would look after us. We have learned by this time how much of what uncle Lavenham said at that time is to be relied upon—'

'Oh, Monica, you do speak unkindly.'

'I cannot help it; I feel unkindly. I think uncle Lavenham did not care how much we suffered afterwards, nor how cruelly our eyes might be opened in the end, so long as we got off comfortably, and without a scene. If Sir Arthur Dorrien ever said anything at all about us—which I begin to doubt—'

'You forget that aunt Fanny saw Lady Dorrien, and that she said the same thing.'

'Ah, yes; I had forgotten that. Then I suppose there was *some* truth in it; but I really begin to wonder very much whether—'

'But the Schofields told Mr. Dorrien we were here, and he said something about his parents.'

Monica shook her head. 'If it has come to that, Bell, we are at a low pass. If it has come to our depending on Daisy Schofield's word for it that the Dorriens' son "said something" about his parents—good luck!' and she laughed with some of her accustomed mirthfulness, a mirthfulness which any sense of the ridiculous seldom failed to inspire. 'Nay, my dear Bell,' Monica now continued more cheerfully, 'to be candid with you, I do not imagine that our connection with the Schofield family is likely to do us much good with people of our own sort. A knowledge of "the widow Schofield and her brood"—do you remember uncle Lavenham's voice?—will hardly advance our claims on the Dorrien interest.'

'But we are not like them,' murmured Isabel, resentfully. 'The Dorriens might know that.'

'How are they to know it? They know that we are nearly related. They know that we have come to live with uncle Schofield; and they know that he is "uncle Schofield." We are not all Lavenham, you must remember, Bell. We really have Schofield blood in our veins,'—Bell tossed her head,—'and it is of no use our forgetting what everybody about is determined to remember. Do you not see how we are claimed as Schofields, as Schofield representatives upon every side? How even Mr. Fairleigh—the person most like a gentleman of anyone we have yet seen—how even he instantly began to talk to us of our grandfather and grandmother? While, as for the other people, they never have "your uncle," or "your cousins" out of their mouths.'

'Oh, *them!*' said Isabel, contemptuously. 'I don't care what they think, or what anybody thinks, if only the Dorriens know who we are. Monica——' and she paused.

'Well?'

'Hadn't—hadn't Mrs. Schofield better ask this young Dorrien to meet us?'

'Good heavens, no! No, that I could not bear,' exclaimed Monica, with almost a stamp of her foot. 'Bell, whatever you do, do not let *that* be done. Bell, you have not been hinting for it,

already, have you? Oh, I am sure you have; I know you have,' as she read the truth in the guilty face opposite. 'Oh, you tiresome——!'

'I—you—do listen—do wait a moment. You are so ridiculous—I will tell you exactly how it happened, if you will only hear me,' implored the culprit, confusion and submission in every lineament. 'Daisy was talking about this Harry Dorrien, and saying that he had been over there every day this week, as the family are all at Cullingdon; and she said that, though they do not visit the parents—or rather the parents do not visit them—that Harry, as she called him, always came to the Grange as often as ever he could. I said something about uncle Lavenham and aunt Fanny knowing Sir Arthur and Lady Dorrien in London, and that I—I—'

'You wished to know them here?'

'No—no—no; I did not indeed, for I knew you would have been angry, if I had. I only said that *if* we met the son, he might let his parents know——'

'Oh, you, Bell!'

'Really and truly, Monica, it dropped out in the easiest manner possible. Nobody could have seen anything in it. And Daisy is not like you; she is not clever; she grinds away at her societies, and her lectures, and classes,—but even I can see that it is all a sort of make-believe. You are as quick as lightning, while she——'

'There, there; don't think you are going to soften me by flattery. I am really very angry—very angry indeed, do you hear? And I wish you had done nothing of the kind. I wish you had bitten your little tongue out before you descended to the level of talking to Daisy Schofield about the Dorriens; but as you have done so, and as she has apparently taken no notice of it, perhaps no great harm has been done. But one thing—why did you not tell me this before?'

'How do you mean? There was nothing to tell.'

'There was this to tell, that you had been talking about the Dorriens to the Schofields.'

'Only to Daisy; and I told you that before.'

'We had agreed that we were not to mention them.'

'She spoke of them first.'

'Now, Bell, no evasions. When did you say that about Harry Dorrien? Now, the simple truth; the truth I will have. So!' And Miss Monica put on the look which everyone instinctively

obeyed, and which her sister Isabel in particular had never dared to trifle with since she had come to years of discretion.

'I only said it yesterday,' she now murmured, meekly.

'And that was why you flew at those cards, to-day?'

'Yes.'

'You thought Daisy had made her mother invite this Dorrien boy to meet us, and that *that* had stirred up the parents to come over?'

'Ye-es.'

'You might at least have taken me into your confidence.'

Bell hung her head.

'You knew I should have been angry; but at least I should not have been hurt. If you would only—only be truthful; if you would not hide things!' and she rose and walked to the window, her tone betraying wounded feeling.

'I am sorry, Monica.'

'It is no great matter, of course,' and Monica gulped down something in her throat. 'But there are only we two, and we have to fight the world together. If I could only depend upon you,' and she paused again.

'I always mean to do what you like,' protested the feebler creature. 'I—but sometimes you frighten me, and then I fib. I can't help fibbing when you frighten me.'

Monica was silent.

'Forgive me, Monica.'

With a sudden swift movement Monica stepped forward, kissed the uncovered brow before her, and left the room.

'Forgive her?' murmured she, to herself. 'Oh yes, I forgive her. It would be hard if I could not forgive her more than that, poor thing; but oh, if I could only make her understand! She will never see, can never feel how paltry a thing it is to lie. Even with me, with *me*, she cannot be open and true, if she has any motive for concealment. I would not tell a lie for the whole world,' cried the proud girl, in the fulness of her heart. It never once occurred to her that she lied both in word and in deed daily.

By nature Monica Lavenham was sincere, courageous, noble; education had smirched and dimmed every attribute. It yet remained to be seen whether of the two, the inherent or the acquired being, would triumph. To be adroit, subtle, pleasing to those whom it was for her advantage to please, was not only defensible in Miss Lavenham's eyes, it was a part of her creed. She believed in the fine art of 'humbugging.' We have seen more-

over, that she could be bitterly sarcastic and cruelly ironical. That also she believed in. Fools and ninnies, pomposity and absurdity in any shape, ought to be shown up, and that without recommendation to mercy. But all of this, she would have told you, was an entirely different matter from the deception of a friend or an ally, from the resorting to subterfuge out of fear.

Isabel had practised such kind of deceit from infancy, and it had never ceased to disturb the other that she would still do so. Monica would not have minded any number of polite fictions, or what she might probably have termed necessary adaptations, on her sister's part; neither would she have objected to an actual exaggeration, distortion, or romance. Only very precise and matter-of-fact people, she argued, supposed it obligatory to stick to set phrases; but what she could not stand was the cowardice of Isabel's falsehoods. Those who knew Monica best would perhaps have seen what she did not herself suspect—that it was more the cowardice than the falsehood which moved her.

Consider what a training the poor girl had had. She was not yet twenty years of age. Before she was seven she had lost a mother's influence and example; from that time till within the last few years there had been merely the surveillance of foreign governesses, alternating with the indulgence of a careless father; and, lastly, the maxims of a thorough-paced man of the world, who would have done infinitely less mischief by letting the youthful soil lie fallow, than by sowing in it his seeds of baleful wisdom and pernicious lore.

And the two fair young creatures who had come to him so confidently, and placed their trust in him so completely, had been at the age of all ages most receptive, most easily impressed. He had himself been surprised, agreeably and flatteringly surprised, by the avidity with which his instructions had been drunk in, and the effect he desired produced. He had exulted in having, as he would declare, given his brothers' orphans not only a roof over their heads, but paternal care and guardianship, and plenty of good sound advice; so that when the time came for them to stand upon their own feet, they would need nobody to tell them what to do, and how to do it. ‘Sharp girls, clever girls, and will stand no nonsense, I tell you,’ he had been wont to confide. ‘I have done my duty by them; and they know a thing or two they would never have got hold of but for me. I have shown them how to make their way in the world, and we shall see them do it, and then they will know whom to thank for it.’

But this had been before the threatened dissolution of the home in Lowndes Square.

Consequent upon that upheaval of all projected plans and projects, there had been a brief period of discontent; a feeling that the brilliant young beauties had hardly answered sufficiently to the whip as it were, in having failed to make the couple of great matches Colonel Lavenham had so confidently predicted for them. They had had two seasons, and plenty of opportunities during intervening months; had had gaieties in the provinces, and on the Continent; and the Miss Lavenhams had been noticed and admired wherever they had gone. Offers had not been wanting, but regarding these there had been no friction in the united little party; since none had been deemed sufficiently unexceptionable either by uncle, aunt, or by the young ladies themselves, to be worthy of so much as a consultation. ‘They will do better yet,’ Colonel Lavenham had cried gaily, and had been well content to begin another campaign.

But then had come the falling of the curtain. Towards the close of the last unsatisfactory London season there had been clouds in the air. The lady of the house had been an almost openly avowed invalid. There had been debates and cogitations. There had been pros and cons about almost every subject of family interest. The gentleman had been pondering and ruminating ament his clubs and his commission. The younger ladies had been wondering, and sympathising, and trying to find out what might be their own future. Everyone had been uneasy and suspicious; until at length, as has been already shown, there had been a feeling of entire exhaustion, and a rebound of strange relief when the bolt had been actually shot, and the separation agreed upon.

In all of this Monica and Isabel had stood by each other. They had always so stood. There had been times now and again when Bell’s soft duplicity, her inveterate habit of concealing or prevaricating, had aroused the indignation of her sister, and it had required all the submission and woe-begone looks of the former to bring round the latter.

But in their great calamity they had been drawn closer together than they had ever been before. Monica had experienced such an infinite pity not only for her fellow-sufferer but for herself, that it had seemed to soften her high spirit as nothing had ever softened it before. She had had no second outbreak, such as had amazed Isabel after Mrs. Schofield’s first visit. She had

endured neighbour after neighbour, torture after torture ; and had felt only more and more compassion for their two forlorn selves, so hopelessly stranded, so wantonly ill-treated. It had made her more tender with Isabel than she had ever been ; and she had told herself that there would now be no more concealments ; that she and the equally luckless Bell were one in heart at least ; and that whatever of trouble, grief, or vexation of spirit the sudden wreckage of their old life had brought upon them, out of the wreck had arisen one great good—the perfect understanding between two who had now no one else in the wide world belonging to them. It was this which made Monica smart and wince beneath the trifling instance of her sister's secretiveness above narrated. It had been after all but a little thing, a mere holding back of a very, very unimportant admission, but it had been the proverbial featherlet showing the way the wind blew. Isabel was not yet cured ; the old nature was not yet wholly eradicated.

To Bell's mind, however, the misfortune was that no good had come of it all. Directly Monica's kiss had fallen on her brow she had revived into complacency, well pleased to have got over an ugly scene, and secure of no more being now said to her about it. She had then felt anew that the Dorriens would be sure to come—Monica's very displeasure meant that she had felt they must now come—and for some days subsequently she rose every morning more and more confident that that day at any rate would not pass without bearing its expected fruit. They never came ; and then, as we have said, Miss Isabel Lavenham began to feel a tardy contrition for the fault which had been so unproductive. ‘I wish I had said nothing about it to Daisy,’ she allowed to herself. ‘Monica was right. It has done no good. If I had told Monica at the time, she would have managed better :’ thus, like many another delinquent, only regretting the misdemeanour when the misdemeanour took the shape of a penalty.

Why had not the Dorriens come ? The Dorriens were—we are going to surprise our readers—as eager to wait upon the Lavenhams as the Lavenhams were to have them do so. What was the meaning of this eagerness ? We are going to surprise our readers still more. It was because the latter were cousins of the Schofields at the Grange.

How the dark eyes of Monica and Isabel would have opened could they have known the truth ! How often would the eyes of you and me, dear reader, open, could we know the real, actual, unvarnished facts about much that happens to us ! We think

ourselves highly honoured by some special act of graciousness, while in truth we are the recipients of a civility which no one else will take the trouble of picking up, and which at length by the merest hap has drifted our way. We take umbrage, on the other hand, at some unpardonable affront or dire neglect. We have simply not been thought of at all. Other motives have been at work, some great object has had to be attained, and we—we who had brooded in unhappy, poignant wrath over our wrong, wondering to what the blow was due, what we had done or said to bring it upon our heads, how we should conceal the smart, and let not the world know of it—we have been all the while as though we were not, in the matter.

The Lavenhams, all in all to themselves, and of first-rate importance in the social world around their uncle's residence, were to the Dorriens simply connections of—Daisy Schofield.

Poor Monica! Poor Isabel! How would their blue patrician blood have boiled and bubbled had they but known!

But now comes another mystery. Such being the case, why, in the name of all that was wonderful and mysterious, did not Sir Arthur and Lady Dorrien—who really and truly had told Colonel and Mrs. Lavenham that they would look after their young relations when in exile—why had they not done so? Why had they never gone over, in solemn state, to make the acquaintance of Mrs. George Schofield? Why had none of the young people ever been asked to Cullingdon? Why—

But we will answer every ‘Why?’ in our next chapter.

CHAPTER VI.

CULLINGDON.

No noisy neighbours enter here,
No intermeddling stranger's near.—COTTON.

THERE could not have existed a more romantic, time-worn, and suggestive abode than the ancient manor of Cullingdon, the seat of Sir Arthur Luke Dorrien, baronet.

Every niche and gable, every gateway and archway, was chronicled among the archaeological features of a parish as old as itself, and even the black-beamed ceilings and panelled walls were known to the antiquarian.

The grounds, with their tangled masses of shade, were beautiful with a strange, weird beauty ; disorder and decay were veiled by the tender touches of soft-hearted Nature, fain to shield such ravages ; and dusky roofing of heavy shadows screened from the garish light of day every wrinkle and hollow, making the universal old age a thing to be worshipped and revered, instead of mocked or scoffed at.

It may have been owing to some such feeling that its present possessor had not touched stick nor stone for a quarter of a century—ever since he had come into possession, in fact. He had been then a man of fifty, and he had known Cullingdon from the day of his birth. He had never known it different from what it was now, he vowed. Why should he begin to do what had never been done before, he wished to know ? Who was he that he should amend the ways of his forefathers ? If they had chosen to leave tottering walls and rampant overgrowth alone, he had as good a right as they, to do so likewise. One thing he knew—with an oath—he knew that no penny of his should ever go to pulling about the old place. It should fall down about his ears first. No, by Jove, he liked it as it was ; and he had a right to like it as it was. It was nobody's business but his own and Harry's after him ; and Harry could do as he pleased when his time came, &c., &c., &c.

All of which the simple speaker thought went down with his neighbours, and stopped their mouths.

They only laughed at him behind his back. They knew all about it ; knew that the poor old man was simply pining to pour forth upon his starving acres the golden shower which should make them break forth into bud and blossom again ; that he could scarce bear to look up at the half-ruined tiles, wondering how long they would hold out, without repairing and restoring ; that, few as were the retainers in office, the wages of his very gardeners and labourers were ever in arrears ; that, in short, the old couple lived from hand to mouth, and scarcely knew which way to turn, in order to keep body and soul together.

This must be read with an understanding mind, be it understood.

We do not mean for a moment to insinuate that Sir Arthur Dorrien had given up his club subscription in town, or that he and Lady Dorrien did not run up to one of the best hotels for some weeks during every London season, or that their son was not in a crack regiment, or, in a word, that they denied them-

selves any of the absolute necessities of life ; they only cut off all extravagant subscriptions and benevolent schemes, had unfortunate attacks of illness whenever they would have liked to show hospitality, did not care for riding and driving, were too old for balls, and recommended Mr. Dorrien, their only son and heir, to be exceedingly careful as to whom he paid attentions, since so much depended on that particular point in his career.

If Harry could only marry money, even Cullingdon Manor was not past holding up its head again.

But my readers will naturally inquire, what was Daisy Schofield that she should aspire to be the choice—you have all divined she was the choice—of the proud, spendthrift Dorriens ? How was she, only one of six or seven, to build up the fortunes of the impoverished house, and reinstate it in the rank it had once held ? Aha ! Sir Arthur knew what he was about, whatever you may suppose. He had discovered a little matter that was not generally given out ; and that, indeed, was not thought much of in a family where all were well endowed, and where a few thousands more or less made but little difference. Daisy had seventy-five thousand pounds of her own. Seventy-five thousand down on her twenty-first birthday she would have, and everybody knows that seventy-five thousand down is a very different matter to seventy-five, or many times seventy-five, in goodness knows how many years to come.

This sum of ready money Daisy had inherited from her maternal grandfather, Mrs. George Schofield's papa, who had made up his mind to leave it to his first grandchild ; and that grandchild proving a daughter had not altered his determination.

A positive old man who held it to be a virtue not to budge from his word once announced, he had died without ever having evinced the slightest irresolution on the point ; and he had furthermore come to an understanding with the little girl's parents that this legacy should in no wise be considered as Daisy's portion, but should be taken as a free gift from himself, her father engaging that her share of his own wealth should be neither more nor less than that of any of her brothers and sisters.

Mr. George Schofield, well pleased, had laughed and promised. He had enough for all, he had said, but if his father-in-law chose to make an heiress of little Daisy, why, of course, he was at perfect liberty to do so, and on the old gentleman's demise there had been so little interest felt in the matter by the junior

members of the family, that no one had ever taken the trouble to inform their new-found connections on the subject. Even Mrs. George Schofield had ceased to remember that Daisy was in any way different from the rest. With her they were all so good-looking and so clever, and so much thought of, and such fine young people in every way, that she would declare she never seemed to feel that she knew which was first or last.

At the period at which our story opens, Daisy was within a few months of being twenty-one years of age; and this fact had been of vast importance in the eyes of someone else, if her own people thought little of it, that someone being old Sir Arthur Dorrien.

'My dear creature, what would you have?' he cried, in confab with a dutiful and obedient spouse. 'Of course you would have preferred one of the Lavenham girls. So should I. There is good blood on one side there, at all events. But of what use is it to think of them? Rich uncle? Pshaw! I have known Joseph Schofield by sight these thirty years, and he has scarcely turned a hair. He is good for another thirty. Add to which, there is nothing secure in that quarter. I tell you, nothing. Lavenham let out as much to me. Naturally Lavenham hopes for the best. So do I. Nice girls, and deuced handsome girls, he tells me. We had better keep them out of Harry's way, till after this affair is settled. But Harry can take care of himself. He is as cool a beggar as I know. It is a perfect godsend—I can hardly believe it even now—his taking to this little Schofield girl. It will be the making of him. It will be the making of us all. If we could only have her over here—but I am afraid to have her here, and that is the truth. Simpson has been at me again for money, and I haven't sixpence forthcoming. He says the lodge gates are giving way. Let them give way, say I. Perhaps we'll have the lodge gates put in repair by this time next year, Mr. Simpson, I thought in my heart; for Harry has promised me one thing, he will lay out a few thousands on the old place directly he has them to lay, and I know how to work it so that he shall keep his word. The brother, that young George Schofield, who, I am told, looks after the business, he shall stipulate with Harry to put the manor in order, and I'll give him the hint how much should be spent upon it. I must choose my own time. If he were to see us now he might take fright and warn off the girl; we must have her fast before we show her the old den; and that is why I should wait a little before having the

Lavenham cousins over here, either. First-rate idea, Lavenham's sending those girls down to this neighbourhood. When we give out the match, we'll call our bride one of the Lavenham family—a connection of the Lavenham family—and take care that the cousins are bridesmaids,' and he rubbed his thin old hands with a wrinkled chuckle. 'You and I may end our days in luxury, my lady,' he ran on. 'And when we make our bow, our son and daughter will reign at Cullingdon Manor as our fathers have reigned before us. The girl will have her hundred thousand if she has a penny, most likely more, a good deal more,—but, anyhow, a hundred thousand will keep the old place going. But quiet, mum's the word at the present moment, Lady Dorrien. Harry must not seem too eager. We must not any of us seem too eager. Those Lavenhams have noses like bloodhounds, if they take after the rest of the breed; and if they raised the alarm, we might have the whole chase for nothing. So softly—softly—*chi va piano va lontano*, hey, my lady? That's not only good Italian, but good sound common sense for you,' and the old fellow trotted off to look once more at his owl-haunted turrets, his empty orchards and stagnant ponds, and consider how best they might be restored to their pristine glory and prosperity under the good time that was now, he devoutly trusted, coming.

His son Harry was now at home. Up to within the last few days Harry had been enjoying his last bachelor season among his bachelor friends, and we need not perhaps add that, when a man feels it incumbent on him to do as much, he usually contrives to do it pretty thoroughly. Harry's father called him a cool beggar. The old gentleman never interfered with his son, never reasoned with him, nor restricted him, nor made demands upon him. He seldom even inquired how Mr. Dorrien spent his time. Mr. Dorrien did not like inquiries, he was aware. He had not liked them himself when he was a young fellow, and even as an old fellow considered them superfluous. Time went fast enough; it went somehow; what mattered it how? Mr. Dorrien was of the same opinion; and accordingly the two got along with all outward decency, and maintained their several positions without disturbance. That neither had the slightest faith in nor love for the other, that neither cared, except in an infinitesimal degree for the other's presence, that neither sought to brighten the other's life, nor would, as a personal loss, have mourned the other's death, in no wise affected the case.

They considered themselves patterns, as fathers and sons went,

Lady Dorrien believed that Sir Arthur and Harry were very good friends. They were never loud nor quarrelsome in their talk. They went to county meetings together, and she knew that occasionally they dined at each other's clubs in town.

And now Harry had told his father about Daisy Schofield. To tell the truth Sir Arthur had been immensely surprised and hugely flattered by the confidence. 'By George, he told me himself, my lady! I tell you he did. Told me all about it! Asked my—my—not my help, confound it! I have no help to give,—but my—our approval—our sanction, that's the word. And I said "God bless you, Harry, my boy; go in and win." That's what I said, for I don't mind owning it; and I haven't been better pleased since the bells were set ringing at his own birth. Go for her, I said; your mother and I will make her welcome. We'll put up with the infernal mercantile connection—no, no, I didn't say that to him, trust me—no, no; I only said, "We'll do the civil by the family of course, Harry; and your mother will call." But he thought it better you shouldn't call. He does not care to have the hue and cry raised; he knows what he's about. Softly, my lady—softly,—*chi va piano va lontano—he! he! he!*'

Harry, however, meant to push the siege himself; he had, it is true, drunk his fill of bachelorhood during those warm July days and nights, which in his eyes represented his last month of grace, and had not endured to leave that festal period behind until the very latest moment, that moment when an electric thrill seems to shoot through all the pulses of the metropolis, scattering its denizens far and wide in the twinkling of an eye.

But that period arrived, he too had been off like the wind. He had dashed down to Cullingdon and ridden over to the Grange the following day. He had discovered that his parents had done as they were bid. They had kept quiet. They had let the Schofields and the Lavenhams alone, (he had heard about the Lavenhams, and his verdict had been, 'Let them alone, too'), and he had returned in the evening after his first visit to the Grange very well pleased with everything, and with himself most of all.

Yes, Daisy was a dear little creature, pretty and presentable; just the thing for him in every way. He had done a clever thing in finding her out; and now that he had begun, he should go on with the affair straightway.

He sang a tune as he rode home through the lanes. He had a loud, sweet voice; and the labourers peeped over the hedge-

rows, to see who the jolly songster might be. He knocked down waving branches of honeysuckle, and stuck them in his button-hole. He felt in a frolicsome, effervescent mood. Mrs. Schofield had wanted him to stay for dinner—she always wanted everybody to stay for dinner—but he had thought he could hardly do that. He had asked a friend down. He would come another day, if she would let him. He hoped she would let him come another day; come often; it was so nice, and pleasant, and lively at the Grange; and at Cullingdon it was so terribly dull. His parents were old, quite old; never went anywhere; kept no company; he had come down to look after them a little, so he must not be too much away—but still he would come as often as ever he could to the Grange, she might be sure of that—and then he had sighed, sighed and smiled boldly in the widow's face, and had seized her plump, outstretched hand, grasped it warmly, and gone home laughing and singing.

'I declare he is handsomer than ever!' mama had cried, looking after him. 'Well, I am glad to think he likes to come to us. But really I think all the nice young men do like to come to us. And I am sure if he is dull at home, we ought to ask him to meet some of them.'

But Daisy had known better. 'You stupid mama!' She had made a face which had some humour and a world of pertness in it. 'As if he wanted other men! As if he could not get plenty of men for himself, if it were men he wanted! It is us, he comes to see—us.' And then she too had begun to sing.

The next day and the next had brought Dorrien; and on the third Daisy had mentioned him to Isabel Lavenham, and had told her, moreover, that they were expecting Mr. Harry Dorrien that very afternoon or evening—in consequence of which communication it was on the following day that the little scene took place between the sisters which has been already narrated.

'Shall we ride round by the Grange this evening, uncle Schofield?'

It had been a sultry, burning day, and the accommodating uncle had been induced to dine early, to dine directly he came home, and order the horses for seven o'clock. A great revolution had taken place in his bachelor household since it had come under petticoat dominion, and as for sitting over his wine in solitary state during the coolest and pleasantest part of the day as he had been wont to do, it was not now to be thought of. He should be allowed to resume the habit presently he was assured

in Bell's liquid accents ; they would not be too cruel to him ; would not make him turn out as soon as the summer evenings began to shorten, and the chills of autumn to creep over the land at nightfall. But just at present, just during these hot, hot days, when they could not possibly go abroad under the fiery glare of the sun ?—He had stopped her by a pat on the shoulder and by telling her she was the most sensible girl he knew.

Furthermore, he had intimated that before that period of autumn chills which she forecast they should have a treat. He would take a holiday, say in September—he did not think he could get away before September, but September was an excellent time for Scarborough—and to Scarborough in September they should go. They had thanked him charmingly, as they always did thank him ; he had thought he read pleasure and gratitude beaming in their eyes ; and how was he to guess that, in the sanctity of their own chamber afterwards, they had asked each other the swift, pertinent question : ‘ Will it be *too* vulgar ? *Too* dreadful ? Can we let him go or not ? ’

They had decided that at any rate the idea need not be negatived for the present, and they had wits enough, poor things, to see that to the present only must they now confine themselves.

We are digressing, however. Our object is merely to show that uncle and nieces were now upon the best of terms ; and that, although the triumphant expectations of the former and the worst auguries of the latter had been alike fulfilled, there yet remained an understanding so excellent between the three, that perhaps Bell and Monica were really happier than they knew, and certainly Joseph Schofield was happier than he had ever been in his life.

How very happy may a man be who is properly managed ! There is really no need to handle him coarsely, and spoil his mouth by tugging at the bit. He ought never to be driven on the curb. He requires but the lightest touch, the merest hint, and he will caper and frisk, and prance and fondle, and be as merry as the day is long, and go exactly the way he is meant to go, when the proper sort of fingers hold the reins.

It was quite a pretty sight to see old Joseph out with his beauties. He would manœuvre in his artless, transparent way to show them off at this house and that, on their country rounds. He would contrive to return home through the more populous villages, and saunter down the streets ; to pull up and call over the walls to the people he knew ; and canter under the windows of houses whose occupants were out upon the terrace or the lawn.

Monica and Bell knew very well what he was about. Perhaps in their secret hearts they did not altogether despise the homage thus brought to their feet. To each other they laughed at it, and suffered it. It amused their uncle, and their uncle had to be amused. As he had bestowed on them their horses, he had an undoubted right to exhibit them on horseback. Their uncle Lavenham had exhibited them without any such right; and this reflection, we may here remark, was only one of many which were forever stealing into their bosoms at unsuspected moments. They were taken at unawares by them.

But all the same it seemed natural and proper that they should dictate and be obeyed in the new life.

Isabel Lavenham knew perfectly well that if there were one place on earth to which Mr. Joseph Schofield did not willingly wend his way on a summer evening, it was to the cousinly domain yclept the Grange. He had the peculiar shrinking aversion of a quiet man towards a voluble, demanding woman. If Mrs. Schofield would have been content herself to talk, and to permit him to be silent, he might have endured her; but it was that excellent woman's way to force an acquiescence or a congratulation by the sheer dint of her persistency; and on the one theme in which she excelled he was willing to have allowed both to be taken for granted. He had not a word to say against the young people, but he did wish he were not required to say so many words for them.

All of this had been early apparent to the quick-witted Monica, and passed on by her to Bell. 'He sees they are insignificant and uninteresting as plainly as ever we do,' and she laughed and nodded. 'He is pretty bright, this uncle of ours. His face is a treat beneath Mama Schofield's yarns; and when he has to look at photographs, to compare one photograph with another, to say if Daisy has not a look of Tottie, and if Tottie has not the eyes of Minnie, and Minnie the chin of Tottie—and then if George is not done great injustice to, because George should have been done in profile, George having such a handsome profile,' ('George's little snub nose, you know,' in parenthesis)—'oh, the whole is a treat! I am never tired of beholding that treat.'

It is to be presumed that Bell also enjoyed the treat; but on the present occasion she had another motive for going to the Grange; and to the Grange accordingly, regardless of the faint shade which anticipation threw over Mr. Schofield's brow, she proposed to repair.

'To the Grange, my dear? Ye-es—my dear; to be sure, yes;

if you and Monica wish it,' replied he, somewhat ruefully. 'By all means let us go to the Grange, if you like. What say you, Monica?' catching at a straw. 'All places are alike to me, you know. I go for the ride, not for the—ahem! The Grange then, if you wish it,' he concluded, hastily.

To please her sister Monica did wish it. She would do Bell a kindness whenever it could be done; and she knew that the little curiosity, and the little anxiety, and the little fret altogether about those tiresome people, those neglectful Dorriens, who had now come to fill so large a space upon their limited horizon, would be soothed and humoured, if not entirely put to rest, should any sort of explanation or apology for their behaviour be forthcoming through the medium of Daisy Schofield.

For herself, Monica had begun to feel an antagonistic spirit rise within her at the bare mention of the Dorriens' name. In her eyes they represented the attitude of her old world towards herself and Isabel at the present moment; she had, it is true, previously divined what that attitude might be, but she did not any the more love those who were now thus confirming her prophetic wisdom.

Still, wisdom or no wisdom, to go to the Grange could do no harm; and since Bell wished it—and the horse's heads were turned that way.

'I wonder if we shall find any new photographs about,' observed Monica, slyly, the point being settled and no retreat possible. 'Just supposing you have a whole set of new photographs to go through, uncle Schofield!'

'Dear me! I hope not, my dear,' obviously alarmed.

'Tottie is sure to have had some new ones taken,' proceeded the tormenting creature. 'She has not been photographed for nearly a fortnight. Tottie is the belle of the family, we all know; she is "a real, beautiful girl," according to her mother. "And so tall, too! But, however," mimicking, "but, however, Minnie is growing too, and no mistake." They will be as tall as Bell and I are, Mrs. Schofield thinks. As for Daisy——' she stopped.

'And what do you think about Daisy?' said her uncle, quietly.

'Oh, we don't think about her at all!' rejoined Miss Monica, with a flick of her pretty riding-whip. The truth was she had a superb contempt for Daisy Schofield.

(*To be continued.*)

At the Sign of the Ship.

IN the September number of this magazine was printed, at the *Sign of the Ship*, one variant of a supernatural story—the story of the Minister, the ferocious man with the sickle—

There is a Reaper, his name is Death—

and the mysterious mounted stranger. In our version the minister was a Wesleyan and a Yorkshireman, because the narrator was born into that creed and a denizen of that county. Another correspondent finds the tale in a printed book, where it is told of a Calvinistic minister in Wales. There are traces of the *Märchen* in Devonshire, and an echo in Australia. To judge from those circumstances, one might fancy that the Nonconformist was particularly favoured, and I would be the last to introduce polemics here, or to deny that perhaps they may be thus privileged. But the Established Church of England is not behindhand in its share of the story. A correspondent communicates a version told by the late Lord Houghton, in which a parish clergyman is accompanied on a lonely walk by the ghost of an old friend of whom he had been thinking. We might call this a subjective hallucination, but the airy companion frightens away a robber just as did the mounted vision in the Dissenting legends. Whether one would not just as soon be saved by a robber from a ghost as by a ghost from a robber is a question for the timid. In the open air I think I prefer the ghost; in a haunted chamber, when the lights burn blue, and your dog howls and dies, and ‘the bodiless gang about,’ the entrance of a burglar of flesh and blood would be warmly welcomed. The Psychical Society, or or least Mr. Podmore, may tell us that Lord Houghton’s clergyman’s ghostly companion was a mere figure of fancy, and that the clergyman’s illusion was ‘telepathetically’ transferred to the imagination of the robber. But this were a very attenuated explanation. Not only the lower clergy, but a Bishop, has been

miraculously favoured, according to yet another correspondent. This was a Bishop of Lincoln. He was going to a Confirmation, when, in a solitary place, the wheel of his carriage came off. ‘A weak-minded man would have sworn, sir, would have sworn,’ to parody an anecdote of Mr. James Payn. The Bishop, on the other hand, prayed. Then up came a stranger, who happened to have in his possession *tout ce qu'il faut pour* repair a carriage-wheel. He repaired it, and then, as the Bishop said, ‘I turned to thank my preserver, but he had disappeared.’

* * *

One cannot expect Calvinistic or Wesleyan readers to believe this prelatrical miracle. But the Church, perhaps, is not very credulous about the stranger who sits up aloft to watch over the fortunes of Dissenting ministers. To the calm scrutiny of science it is plain that all these stories are one story. Let us appeal to the Folklore Society, and induce them to hunt examples of it through the Middle Ages. When we come to classical times, we find the story in full vigour. The mounted stranger is one of the twin Dioscouroi, Castor and Polydeuces. Their peculiar function in Greek myth is to ride up at the very nick of time and help people in distress. There is a long passage to this effect in Theocritus. Among the Vedic Indians the Aćvin brothers have precisely the same duty—the mounted Aćvins. They save one man from a wolf, another from a well; they give another a wooden leg (or was it an iron leg?), and so forth. Muir's *Sanskrit Texts* may be consulted by the curious. If we can only find mediæval variants, more to the point than the appearance of St. James to the Spaniards in a battle with the Aztecs, as reported by Bernal Diaz, then we have traced a myth from the Vedas into the Hagiology of modern Dissent. Of course, this would not demonstrate that the stories are not true. There *may* be Aćvins; Castor and Polydeuces may have been converted, and may keep on their benevolent business still. Human nature, at all events, has not altered in this respect, and the devout Calvinist or Wesleyan may be firm in the same faith as the pious Rishi who hymned the Great Twin Brethren.

* * *

Science seems at last to be in the right way. We are not much the happier for getting bad news quicker by electricity, and bad goods cheaper by machinery; but if science has invented

invisible gut, or something as good as invisible gut, then we have a better chance with the most cautious trout. In a recent number of *Nature* a man of science tells us how it is done. You melt quartz, and you produce a thread of quartz by firing it off attached to an arrow in a little cross-bow. The thread will hold a weight of several tons (bigger than even a tarpon fish can be expected to be), and the thread may be so fine as to prove invisible, even under a microscope. ‘Gut-shy’ fish will thus be deluded. They will only see the olive dun, or other fly; the quartz gut they cannot see, even if their eyes are ‘double patent million magnifiers.’ If quartz may be made into gut, surely granite may become a textile fabric, and we may weave the Ross of Mull into coats and trousers. The colours of the granite in the Ross of Mull are excellently suited for these fabrics.

* * *

A lady sends from Suffolk the following curious fragment of a ballad, which, she says, ‘has a very good tune.’ But who, she asks, is the Duke of Bedford, or who the Princess Mary? Is she the sister of Henry VIII., who married Louis XII. of France? No light is thereby thrown on the Duke of Bedford. Any information from genealogists will be gladly received. Tradition is oddly tenacious of some things. The head of a Border family fell at Killiecrankie, and, quite recently, an old man in the neighbourhood could still point out the tree under which his entrails were buried when the body was carried to the dead warrior’s country.

BALLAD FRAGMENT.

Six lords went a-hunting down by the seaside,
And they spied a dead body washed away by the tide.

Said one to the other, ‘As I’ve heard them say,
‘Tis the famous Duke of Bedford by the tide washed away.’

They took him up to Portsmouth, to the place where he was born,
From Portsmouth up to London, to the place where he was known.

They took out his bowels and laid down his feet,
And they garnished his body with roses so sweet.

Six lords went before him, six bare him from the ground,
Eight dukes followed after in their black velvet gowns.

And the Royal Princess Mary went weeping away.

So black was the funeral and so white were their fans,
And so pretty were the flamboys that they carried in their hands.

The drums they did beat and the trumpets they did sound,
And the great guns they did rattle as they put him in the ground.

* * *

The following Hindoo *Märchen* was told by the late Sir Alexander Grant, Principal of Edinburgh University, who had heard it in India. Part of the idea—the various pretensions of the lovers—occurs in the story of the Prince Achmet and the Fairy Badroulbadour. But the conclusion is novel and unexpected, and I do not think the tale has ever been printed before in English.

* * *

THE LADY AND FOUR LOVERS.

Once upon a time there was a beautiful Indian girl who had four lovers. They were all of equal rank, only one was much richer than the others. She could not make up her mind which of the four lovers to choose for a husband. While she hesitated she caught a fever and died. You will think the story ends here. But it does not. The girl was carried to her grave, followed by her four lovers. When the grave was opened one of them killed himself on the grave, and was buried with the girl. Another got up into a tree and spent the night, saying, ‘Boh and Bah,’ to keep off the jackals from eating the bodies. The rich lover went back to his fine house and spent the night in weeping and lamenting. The fourth lover put on the dress of a holy pilgrim, and started for a distant shrine. Soon after he had left his native village, he came to a wood. In the wood he saw a house. He went and looked in at the window, and he saw an old woman baking bread, and a child playing noisily about. The old woman told the child to be quiet or she would kill her. The child took no notice, and went on making as much noise as before. Then the old woman took hold of her and strangled her, and threw her body in the corner. When the pilgrim saw this he rushed in and asked the old woman what she meant. ‘What’s the matter?’ said she; ‘there’s nothing to make a fuss about. I have only quieted her.’ Then she went to a cupboard and took out a bottle containing some white powder, with which she sprinkled the child,

who at once jumped up and began playing about as noisily as before. When the pilgrim saw this, he said to the old woman, 'I am a very holy man on my way to a shrine, and you must give me shelter for the night.' The old woman said she would, and so he stayed. In the night he got up quietly and went to the cupboard, and took the powder and went away back to the village as quickly as he could. When he got there he collected the villagers, and told them to open the grave. As soon as it was opened they saw the bodies of the girl and of the lover who had killed himself just as they had left them, and the other lover was still crying 'Boh and Bah' in the tree. The pilgrim then sprinkled the girl with the powder, and some of it falling on the body of the lover they both jumped up and seemed in perfect health. Then the lovers all began to claim the lady again. The first said, 'I ought to have you, for I died for you.' The one in the tree said, 'If it had not been for me you could not have come to life again, for the jackals would have eaten you.' The third said, 'Did I not go home and weep all night?' and the fourth said, 'You must be mine, for I brought you to life again.' Then, as the girl could not still decide which of the four to marry, it was resolved that the matter should be brought before the rajah, and that he should decide it. So the rajah assembled his court with great pomp, and called the lady and all the lovers before him. He listened with great attention to each as he set forth his claim. When he had heard all, he said, 'As I find myself quite unable to decide between so many rivals, I see the only one way out of the difficulty is that I should marry the lady myself.'

* * *

Count Tolstoi has lately discovered that nobody should ever marry, if the marriage could give pain to any other body. As it happens, M. Paul Bourget's new novel, *Un Cœur de Femme*, turns on the fortunes of a lady who was as charitable and kind, in her love affairs, as the Count could wish. Out of mere goodness of heart, and because she was sorry for him, the widowed Madame de Tillières became virtually, and for moral reasons, the secret wife of M. de Poyanne. They were to be married as soon as somebody died. Then Madame de Tillières fell violently in love with M. de Casal, who returned her affection. What was she to do? As soon as she saw poor M. de Poyanne, she was even more sorry for him than ever, because, as she had ceased to care for him, he was even more than previously an object of sympathy.

She could not marry M. de Casal, because M. de Poyanne would dislike it so much. Then she was more sorry than ever, also for M. de Casal, who threatened to pursue his course to the dogs. It is an extremely clever novel, in spite of M. Bourget's little lectures on *la vie mondaine*: in spite of his excususes on psychology. We are as sorry for all of them as Madame de Tillières was, but the inevitable moral remains, that Count Tolstoi is wrong, that we must not mix up pity and love—these passions are too near akin to marry. If Madame de Tillières had been a less wildly sympathetic person, less like

The Bandicoot,
The Bandicoot,
That wildly sympathetic brute,

they might all have been not so very miserable after all, for people who 'lived for the affections,' that is. It seems to be a mistake to live for the affections, and a gentleman who has recently been writing 'Letters to Living Authors' will be certain that this critic has a stone where his heart should be.

* * *

For various reasons one cannot review Mr. Steuart's 'Letters to Living Authors,' but surely the form of the criticism is not its strong point. You cannot decently tell a man to his face exactly what you think of his work, unless he be a most intimate friend, unless he asks your advice, unless his book is still unpublished, and your counsel has yet a chance of being accepted. Even then, the task is delicate: we learn how Scott viewed Blackwood's criticisms, and, in an epistle in *Marmion*, he asks even his dearest ally, William Erskine, to sink the critic.

Still kind, as is thy wont, attend,
And in the minstrel spare the friend.

Others there are who will permit friendship to be critical, and will even act on well-meant advice, with the simplicity and want of vanity that marks a noble nature. But, when a work is done, who would then bluffly tell his mind about it, even to his other self, if the other self were the author? Much less, then, is such a form of criticism natural, or possible, or desirable, in publicly addressing strangers. The manners of Junius, however softened, are fit, perhaps, for politics, not for literature. The personal

address brings in a tone that cannot be natural. How can any one say that Mr. — — ‘has an apoplectic style,’ whatever that may mean, *to* Mr. — —? As you read such a remark you blush—like a former novelist over his love scenes—‘as if you were going into an apoplexy’ yourself.

* * *

The following lullaby, by Mr. Eugene Field, has probably been published in this country before, though we have only seen it going round in manuscript, among its private admirers. Neither Blake nor Mr. Stevenson has written, to my mind, a more delightful song of childhood. The more people who know it the better, and if any one has read it already, he will probably be glad to read it again.

DUTCH LULLABY.

Wynken, Blynken and Nod one night
 Sailed off in a wooden shoe—
 Sailed on a river of crystal light
 Into a sea of dew :
 ‘Where are you going, and what do you wish?’
 The old moon asked the three ;—
 ‘We have come to fish for the herring-fish
 That live in this beautiful sea ;
 Nets of silver and gold have we !’
 Said Wynken,
 Blynken
 And Nod.

The old moon laughed and sang a song,
 As they rocked in the wooden shoe,
 And the wind that sped them all night long
 Ruffled the waves of dew.
 The little stars were the herring-fish
 That lived in that beautiful sea ;—
 ‘Now cast your nets wherever you wish—
 Never afeared are we ;’
 So cried the stars to the fishermen three :
 Wynken,
 Blynken
 And Nod.

AT THE SIGN OF THE SHIP.

All night long their nets they threw
 To the stars in the twinkling foam—
 Then down from the skies came the wooden shoe,
 Bringing the fishermen home ;
 'Twas all so pretty a sail, it seemed
 As if it *could not* be,
 And some folk thought 'twas a dream they'd dreamed
 Of sailing that beautiful sea ;—
 But I shall name you the fishermen three :
 Wynken,
 Blynken
 And Nod.

Wynken and Blynken are two little eyes,
 And Nod is a little head,
 And the wooden shoe that sailed the skies,
 Is a wee one's trundle-bed.
 So shut your eyes while mother sings
 Of wonderful sights that be,
 And you shall see the beautiful things,
 As you rock in the misty sea
 Where the old shoe rocked the fishermen three :—
 Wynken,
 Blynken
 And Nod.

EUGENE FIELD.

London: October 20, 1890.

* * *

A writer in the *Spectator* has been taking an earnest view of golf. In his opinion the game demoralises the members of the poorer classes whom it touches. He probably overstates his case. There is nothing necessarily demoralising in carrying clubs. The caddie begins as a little boy; his employers are almost invariably kind to him, and he is often a very good and intelligent little chap, earning something in a way not too laborious, and much to his taste. He *need* not gamble with his brethren, nor swear, and we should be very careful, in his presence, about the language we utter in bunkers. Yet one would not wish a boy to pursue the profession; it is difficult, as a writer in *Golf* queerly remarks, to steer between the Scylla of a sober life and the Charybdis of intemperance. Better hug the rock of the respectable Scylla.

Still, if a lad has skill and sobriety, he may do very fairly well at golf. He has an admirable pattern before him in such examples as Tom Morris. I suppose he works in a club-maker's shop. What is there demoralising in that? If he plays well and works well, he may become a green-keeper, and enjoy a life perfectly healthy, amid general esteem. Nobody compels him to bet and to drink, and the temptations of gambling and whisky are not confined to the links. If a golf club had a private links of its own, it might employ only regular characters; for example, old men incapacitated for harder work, as in a case well known to every player at St. Andrews. But where, as at St. Andrews, the links are public it is impossible for a club to disqualify a caddie, and forbid him the ground. Attempts to provide coffee-houses and shelters have not usually been successful. It is hanging about in cold or damp weather, waiting for custom, that demoralises the caddie. With him, too, it is light come and light go, as far as his gains are concerned. On links where all the world may play, or accompany the players, it is hard to see how the chances of the caddie can be improved by the clubs. Ladies have taken the boyish caddie in hand, have entertained him at tea, and given him literary, and perhaps religious instruction. Every regular player, by sticking to one young caddie, keeping a paternal eye on him, and providing him with other employment, may do something, and might do more. These arts are not neglected where golf is regularly played by residents in a town. It is the summer visitors who bring in confusion, and a rush of not the best characters to the links. How is this to be mended, where a club is practically powerless, except in setting a better example? One does not like to hear caddies spoken of as invariably dirty and dissolute. This is very far indeed from being a true view of the case. But an influx of casual summer visitors attracts all the worst loafers to the green, and the regular caddies get an undeserved bad character. As a rule, they are quiet, loyal, good-humoured, and humorous, quite as much as the right kind of professional cricketers. Drink ruins a man's play as much as it ruins his nature, but there are men whom no warning and no suffering will keep away from whisky. That is not the fault of golf.

A. LANG.

The 'Donna.'

THE EDITOR begs to acknowledge the receipt of the following contributions:—

Collected by A. K. L., 20s. Anon, 1s. E. S. M. M., 10s. Emily (Night Refuge), 2s. M. H., 6 francs 50 centimes. Thos. Squire, 6 pairs of knitted socks. Herts Needlework Guild, a parcel of clothing.

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NOTICE TO CORRESPONDENTS.

The Editor requests that his correspondents will be good enough to write to him informing him of the subject of any article they wish to offer, before sending the MS. A stamped and addressed envelope should accompany the MS. if the writer wishes it to be returned in case of non-acceptance. The Editor can in no case hold himself responsible for accidental loss. All communications should be addressed to

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